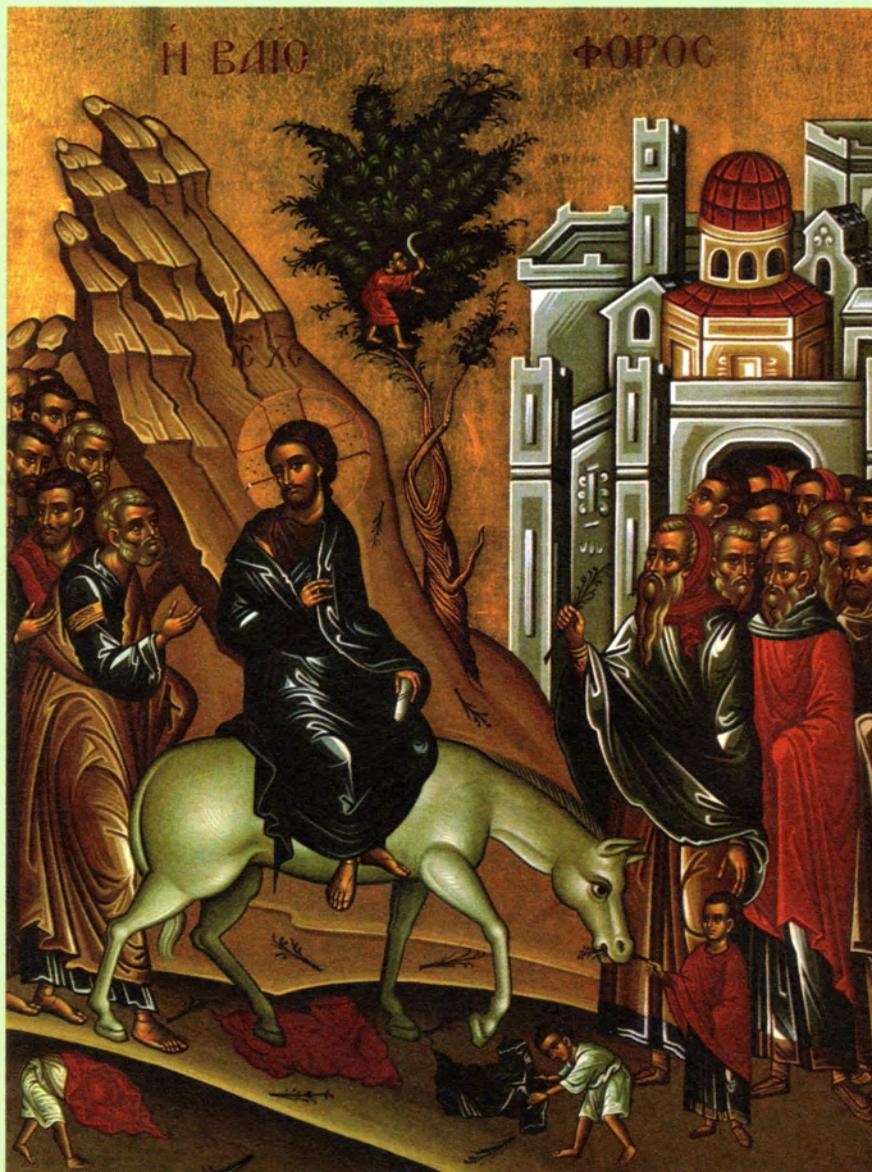
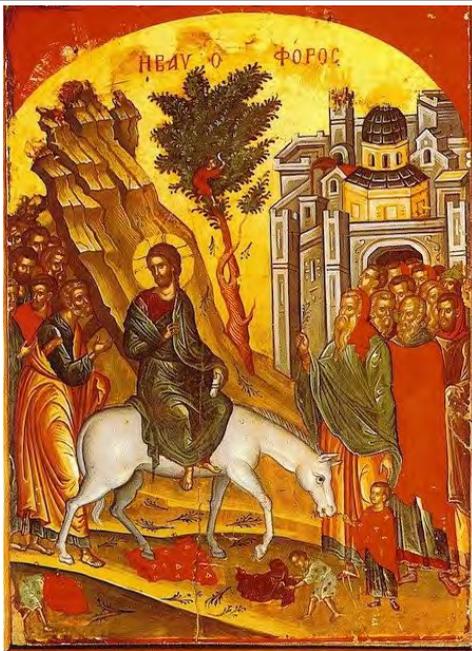


ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM
(PALM SUNDAY)



Icon of the Entrance into Jerusalem

Reflections on the Scripture Readings for this Weekend



The Great Lent and Holy Week are two separate fasts and two separate celebrations. The Great Lent actually ends on Friday of the fifth week. The following day, Lazarus Saturday, begins the Great and Holy Week. This special week begins by the Church recalling that the Lord raised Lazarus from the dead. By this act, the Church confirms her true belief in the universal resurrection of all from the dead. This act also prefigures the Lord's own resurrection that we will celebrate on the Great Day - Pascha - Easter.

After we recall this event, we celebrate *Willow* or *Palm Sunday*, the Lord's voluntary

entrance into Jerusalem to His death.

The *Monday*, *Tuesday* and *Wednesday* of Passion Week are called the "the days of the Bridegroom" because the Church focuses our thoughts on Christ as her Bridegroom, Who bears the marks of His suffering and yet prepares a marriage Feast for us in God's Kingdom.

Of course Holy *Thursday* remembers that the Lord promised to be with His Church always and made this truly possible by transforming bread and wine into His own Body and Blood. He established this miraculous way to be with His followers.

Great and Good *Friday*, of course, is the day upon which we remember His voluntary and noble death. On this day we sit vigil at His grave in thanksgiving for His great love.

Great and Holy *Saturday* is truly a day of hope and waiting. Although we know the end of the story, nevertheless we await to hear again the words which stir our hearts and minds as we celebrate the fact that God has rescued us from Death.

Passion Week ends on Saturday since **PASCHA** is a day unto itself and marks a new beginning for the followers of Christ - the true beginning of God's Kingdom on earth. This new beginning is marked by an eight-day week. The first new week, which runs from Pascha to Thomas Sunday, is considered by the Church to be one week - Bright Week. Each day is marked by the use of one of the Eight Tones that are the proper prayers that we use during Ordinary Time.

**Our Church presents all that Christ did for us
in a most magnificent fashion.**

Let us truly enter into this Week with faith.

Understanding Our Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

It is my hope that as we enter into this Great and Holy week, that you, my readers, will join with me in thinking about the meaning of what we recall. It is important, I believe, that we don't just participate in the services of this week without understanding their implication for our lives. We are called not to remember some past events but, rather, to understand what these events mean for our present life. When this week is over, it should not be that we just go back to our normal life. Life should change in some way each time we celebrate these events.

We are called to understand that when the world rejected its Savior, when He died on the Cross, *normal life* came to an end and it is no longer possible. For there were *normal* men and women who shouted "Crucify Him!" Who spat at Him and nailed Him to the Cross! And they hated and killed Him precisely *because He was troubling their normal life*. It was indeed a perfectly *normal* world which preferred darkness and death to light and life. Jesus' death caused the irrevocable condemnation of what is considered a *normal* world or a *normal* life. His death indeed revealed the true and abnormal nature of human life as it was and is without the Light of God's revelation, Jesus. The way that Jesus lived and died is God's revelation to humankind about the meaning and purpose of this earthly life.

The Pascha of Jesus signifies to



those who believe in Him, an end to a world that is only guided by human wisdom - a world without faith.

The word Pascha means Passover or passage. The Feast of Passover was and is for the Jews the annual commemoration of their whole history as salvation - a passage from the slavery of Egypt to freedom from exile into the Promised Land. It is also the anticipation of the ultimate passage - into the Kingdom of God.

Christ, we believe is the fulfillment of Pascha. He performed the ultimate passage: from death into life, from this *normal* world into a new world, into the new time of the Kingdom. He opened the possibility of this passage to us.

Living in this world we can already be not of this world, we can be free from slavery to death and sin and partakers of the *world to come*.

But for this to happen, we must perform our own passage, we must put on Christ, condemning the old Adam in us. And thus Pascha is not an annual commemoration of a past event. It is this Event itself that must lead us to a new way of living, inspiring us to desire a deeper union with our God by a transformed life.

The Divine Liturgy and Our Worship of God

On this Willow Weekend, we use the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. The Liturgy of St. Basil the Great remains a part of the Great Lent or Fast. The Tropar for this feast has us pray:

O Christ God, You confirmed the resurrection of all before the time of Your Passion by raising Lazarus from the dead: therefore we, like the children of Israel, carry the symbols of victory and cry out to You the Conqueror of death: Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

The Church reminds us that the Lord's actions before His death and then His glorious resurrection after His burial, remind us that He, by His loving actions, has revealed to us that life is truly *eternal* and *immortal* and that bodily death is only the means that God has created to help us make a transition from this present life to the next stage of our eternal life. Jesus revealed this by raising Lazarus from the dead. He confirmed this fact by His own resurrection.

Our God, through these actions of His Son, desired to reveal to us the true meaning and purpose of this earthly life. There is a reason why we are here. Our lives are not just some sort of *accident!* Indeed we are given this earthly life to spiritually grow and to increase our awareness of the true nature of the life that we have been given. Human life is non-other-than a sharing in God's own Divine Life. In fact, God's life-force vivifies all of



creation. His life-force calls all things into existence and maintains them in existence. This is what we are called to believe.

Some may find this hard to believe and resist committing themselves to this belief. While I realize that it cannot be empirically proven, it is a belief that gives a certain sense to this life. It also brings a deep sense to the worship (i.e., the Divine Liturgy) that we offer to the Father together with Jesus.

The Divine Liturgy confirms two very important things: (1) that our incarnate God, in the Person of Jesus, IS WITH US when we recall what He did on the night before He died; and (2) human life is a participation in God's own life. The symbols of life, namely bread and wine which are representative of life, are CHANGED and TRANSFORMED into the very life of Jesus Himself. This is meant to be more than just symbolic. In truth, as we humbly receive the Body and Blood of Christ - Christ Himself - into our lives, we are transformed and radically changed - we become true children of God. Let us enter into this Great and Holy Week with this firm belief in our union with our God.



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



CONGRATULATIONS

And best wishes are extended to Drs Toni & Christie Grech on the initiation of their daughter

ANASTASIA MARIE

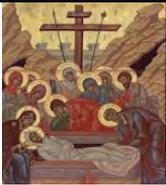
into the Church. May God grant her and her family Many Happy Years.

Многая літа – Многая літа

2017 SVIACHENNE

April 23rd - After Liturgy

You will find an invitation for our Annual Easter Dinner in the Bulletin. It will be a catered dinner. So, RESERVATIONS are essential! We hope that cancellations after April 16th will be honored with a donation.



VIGIL AT THE GRAVE

If you haven't signed up yet to keep Vigil at Christ's Grave, why no do so today. More than one person can sign up for an hour.

We need, however, 20 people to cover our Vigil. I would ask that if you come to keep Vigil, that you would, at some point during your stay, that you would offer a small prayer for Our Parish, that God might sustain us through the years to come.

Try to make the Great and Holy Week special. You will not regret it! Remember its about your life too!

CALLED TO HOLINESS

As we enter into this Great and Holy Week, I believe that the Call to Holiness is a call to truly reflect upon the events in Christ's life as real and true revelations about how we must live if we truly wish to be children of our Heavenly Father. I truly believe that if we sincerely enter into the observance of Great and Holy Week, we will discover that God has, out of love for us, given us a guide for living this human, earthly life. That guide is His Son, Jesus. The events that we remember are meant to help us find the true meaning and purpose of life. They are not just abstract, historical events that have no meaning. They truly reflect in some way, I believe, how we must live if we desire to grow in our union with our God.



Jesus, as truly man, embraced the challenges of His life as real opportunities to grow in His trust of our Heavenly Father. The events of the last days of His life truly challenged Him to trust in the Father and to accept life as it was presented to Him. There were

(Continued on page 8)

A PRAYER A DAY FOR THE GREAT FAST

This year the prayers are based, in part, on the Matins Services of the Great Fast

WILLOW SUNDAY, APRIL 9th

Today, O God, the grace of Your Holy Spirit calls me to join my community of believers, my Church, in welcoming Christ my Savior into my heart and life just as the people welcomed Him into Jerusalem. Help me to cry out in my heart: Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest! As I enter into this Great and Holy Week, O God, I ask Your help to focus my attention on the life, death and burial of Jesus so that I may truly cry out with great joy on Pascha: **CHRIST IS RISEN**. Grant me the courage, O God, to commit myself to meeting the challenges of my life as He did. I ask this of You Who I call Father, Son and Spirit, now and forever. **AMEN**.

GREAT & HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 10th

Today, O God, the Church reminds me that Jesus is truly its Bridegroom, the One sent by You to help us truly understand the meaning and purpose of life. I would utter the prayer that is on her lips and say: Behold the Bridegroom comes in the middle of the night and blessed is the servant whom He shall find watching, but unworthy is he whom He shall find in slothfulness. Beware, then, O my soul, and be not overcome by sleep, lest you be given over to death and shut out from the Kingdom. But return to soberness and cry aloud: Holy, holy, holy are You, O God, through the prayers of the Mother of God, have mercy on me. Help me, O God, to be the servant who is found watching and mindful of Your revelation to me and Your presence in my life. I ask this of You Who I call Father, Son and Spirit, now and forever. **AMEN**.

GREAT & HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 11th

O God, I join today with the Church in offering this prayer: Impious Judas, with avaricious thoughts, plots against the Master and ponders how he will betray Him. He falls away from the light and accepts the darkness. He agrees upon the payment and sells Him that is above all price. As the reward for his actions, he receives a hangman's noose and death in agony. O Christ our God, deliver me from such a fate and grant me the remission of my sins as I prepare to celebrate your most pure Passion. I pray, keep me from betraying Your great love by refusing to make an attempt to live like Jesus. Help me to live each day more like Jesus. I ask this of You Who I call Father, Son and Spirit, now and forever. **AMEN**

GREAT & HOLY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12th

The woman, who was once a prodigal, suddenly became chaste and, hating the works of shameful sin and the pleasures of the body, she thought upon her deep disgrace and the torment to which she would be condemned. Of them I am the first and I am afraid, yet senselessly I continue in my evil ways. But the woman who as a harlot, filled with fear, made haste and came crying to the Deliverer: 'O merciful Lord who loves mankind, deliver me from the filth of my works.' May her prayer, O God, be my prayer and may I, like her, turn to You and profess my sins and ask Your forgiveness. I ask You to help me realize Your love. I ask this of You Who I call Father, Son and Spirit, now and forever. **AMEN**

A PRAYER A DAY FOR THE GREAT FAST

This year the prayers are based, in part, on the Matins Services of the Great Fast

GREAT & HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 13th

O Heavenly Father, Your Son Jesus instructed His friends in the Mysteries of life and He prepared a table that gives food to my soul. He also mingled for us, His faithful followers, the cup of the wine of life eternal. Therefore, let me, O God, approach these mysteries with reverence and cry aloud: O Christ our true God may You be greatly praised. Let me, O God, give ear to the exalted preaching of Your uncreated and consubstantial Wisdom, Jesus Christ, for He cries aloud: O taste and see that I am good! Help me to know, O my loving God, that when I receive the Body and Blood of Your Son, He is truly with me and with Him are You, Father, Son and Spirit. This I ask this of You now and forever. AMEN

GREAT & GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 14th

O Lord, when I think about all that You endured for my sake so that I might understand the meaning and purpose of life, I am humbled. When I think about how You endured Your cruel torture and crucifixion, I am deeply moved. You suffered all of these things to show me how to live and to truly become a spiritual child of Our Heavenly Father. You showed me how to face the challenges of my life which, in comparison to what You faced, are truly so very insignificant. You endured all of these horrible cruelties to assure me that You are with me during all the challenge of my life. Help me, O loving Lord, to face life with the nobility and dignity that You did. I ask You to help me, Father, Son and Spirit, to live as Jesus lived. AMEN

GREAT & HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 15th

He Who holds all things in unity was lifted on the Cross and the whole creation wept to see Him hanging naked on the Tree. The sun hid its rays and the stars cast aside their brightness. The earth shook in mighty fear, the sea fled and the rocks were rent and many graves were opened and the bodies of the saints arose. Hell groaned below and those who crucified Him considered how to spread false tidings against Christ's Resurrection. But the women cried aloud: 'This is the most blessed Sabbath on which Christ sleeps, but on the third day He shall rise again.' Although I believe in Your resurrection, O Lord, I wait with stilled breath to be able to declare again: Christ is Risen. Help me to understand the miracle of Your Holy Resurrection. AMEN

THE GREAT DAY

We bring to an end another Great Fast with the glorious celebration of Christ being raised from the dead. It is my hope that the Great Fast of 2017 has been spiritually rewarding for all those who have made this journey with me. It is my hope that in some small way my efforts to offer daily prayers have been of some help and benefit to you. If they have helped in any way, I would beg only that you remember me in your prayers and ask Almighty God to be merciful to me.



Schedule of Services

Sunday, April 9 - Willow or Palm Weekend - Festal Tone
10:00 AM -

GREAT AND HOLY WEEK

Great and Holy Monday, April 10 - Martyr Terence and Others
No Service Scheduled at St. Michael's

Great and Holy Tuesday, April 11 - Bishop-Martyr Antipas
7:00 PM - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Great and Holy Wednesday, April 12 - Confessor Basil
No Service Scheduled at St. Michael's

Great and Holy Thursday, April 13 - Priest-Martyr Artemon
7:00 PM - Divine Vespereal Liturgy and Holy Anointing

Great and Good Friday, April 14 - Confessor Martin
7:00 PM - Vespers and Burial Service

Great and Holy Saturday, April 15 - Apostle Arstarchus and Others
No Liturgy Scheduled — Confessions and Vigil

Sunday, April 16 - PASCHA - THE GREAT DAY - VELIKDEN
8:00 AM - Resurrection Matins, Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Easter Food

St. Michael the Archangel
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church
6340 Chase Road
Dearborn, MI 48126

Rev. Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Pastor

Rectory: (313) 582-1424
Cell: (313) 580-4412
WRuchgy@gmail.com

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sundays @ 10:00 AM
Ukrainian & English

Weekdays @ 8:00 AM
English

SACRAMENTS

Penance
By Appointment

Baptism & Matrimony
*In most instances membership
required for six months*

Funerals
*Membership of an immediate
family member required*

Parish Life Council

Bob & Corinne Boyko
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky
313.563.5509

Daria Drobny
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky
248.431.9554

Leo & Mary LaDouceur
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak
734.564.9817

Leonard Mier
313.584-6795

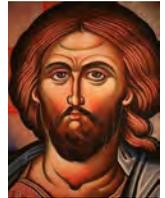
Greg & Esther Petrovich
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter
313.624.9867

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

opportunities in the last days of His life, to escape the challenges that He and others foresaw. The fact that He was repeatedly challenged by the leaders of Judaism, told Him that they were upset with His actions and interpretations of their religion. So He was quite aware that they might try something to silence Him. In fact the Gospels tell us that His disciples tried to keep Him from going to Jerusalem.

Much like the prophets before Him, He realized that He had to present the truth as He knew it to be. Like the prophets before Him, He realized that to run away in fear of what might happen to Him, would be tantamount to telling people that what He taught was not true. Prophets before Him were killed for speaking the truth, albeit not in quite as horrendous manner. Besides being God's only-begotten Son, Jesus was also truly a prophet.



<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org> - and - [Facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)

Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the New Testament

In the last issue I shared that Mark used the word *straightway* numerous times. In the passion narrative of the Gospel, however, Mark uses the word sparsely and ironically. Judas arrives to betray Jesus *straightway* and approaches him with a kiss *straightway*. After he has denied Jesus three times, Peter hears the second cockcrows *straightway*. The high priest calls the council to condemn Jesus *straightway*. If one recalls Mark's earlier use of the word, the irony here seems heavy. At the same time, by using it Mark is signaling a larger irony by which, in spite of all appearances, God's plan is going straight.

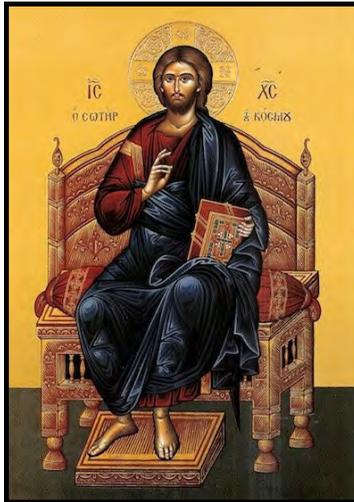
Another key word translated literally in the Gospel is *ecstasy*. If one analyzes the elements of this word, one sees that it is made up of two parts *ek*, which means *out* in Greek and *stasis*, which is related to the Greek word for *stand*. Thus to experience *ecstasy* means to *stand outside* oneself, to be outside one's normal state of being. Mark uses one form of this word when he wants to indicate that someone is *out of his mind*. When Jesus cures the paralytic, for example, Mark first describes his cure as a kind of resurrection, saying that the man *rose up*, picked up his mat *straightway and went away in the sight of everyone*. He then says, "they

were all *out of their minds* and glorified God saying, 'We have never seen anything like this'. A similar use occurs in Chapter 3 when Mark says that those close to Jesus thought that Jesus was *out of his mind*.

Mark uses a different form of the same word to indicate moments when something Jesus does or says causes people to experience an abnormal state of awareness and joy. He uses both forms of the word to describe the scene in which Jesus raises up the daughter of Jarius. When Jesus arrives, people are already lamenting her death. Then, Mark tells us, "He said to her, '*Talitha kum*', which means *Little girl, rise up.*" Then Mark describes the reaction of those witnessing this event: "the girl, a child of twelve, *rose up straightway* and walked around. At that, they were *out of their minds with ecstasy*."

At the end of the Gospel, when three women come to Jesus' tomb to anoint him, they discover that his body is not there, and a young man in white tells them: "He has been raised." Mark then describes their response as one of "trembling and *ecstasy*". Mark has prepared his readers for this response by the earlier episodes.

More to come!



Learning Our Faith From the Greek Fathers of the Church



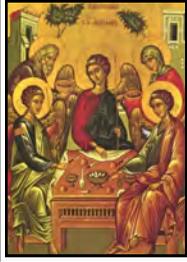
The Arians fundamentally err, Athanasius asserts, in limiting their thinking and speaking about God to what seems possible from a human perspective. Athanasius concedes that if the Scripture were describing a human man or relationship, the Arians would be correct. “Now if they are discussing a *man*, then they may argue about his word and his son on the human level. But if they are talking of God, man’s creator, they must not think of him on the human level.”

This, Athanasius contends, is the Arian’s fundamental mistake. Human procreation does take place in time and space. Human fathers are both older and

separate from their children. Begetting does involve division and separation. Not so, however, with God. The Arians have forgotten who the subject of the discussion actually is: “The character of the parent determines the character of the offspring. Man is begotten in time and begets in time; he comes into being from non-existence.” The same is true of human speech: “his word ceases and does not remain. A human word is a combination of syllables, and has no independent life or activity; it merely signifies the speaker’s meaning, and just issues and passes away and disappears, *since it had no existence at all before it was uttered*; therefore a man’s word has no independent life and activity; in short it is not a man.

The Arians are guilty of a serious category error. They have applied human categories to God in an inappropriate and illogical fashion. “God,” Athanasius insists, “is not like man.” Rather, “he is ‘he who exists’ and exists forever.” Furthermore, “his Word is ‘that which exists,’ and exists eternally with the Father, *as radiance from a light*. But God’s word is not merely ‘emitted,’ as one might say, nor is it just an articulate noise; nor is ‘the Son of God’ just a synonym for ‘the command of God,’ but he is the perfect offspring of the perfect.” God’s divine Word [Jesus, the Christ] is, indeed, utterly unique.

We see that Athanasius argues quite forcefully against Arius’ teachings and truly asserts that Jesus, although begotten by the Father, is eternal with the Father.



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНИЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 63 No 15 Willow/Palm Weekend April 8-9, 2017

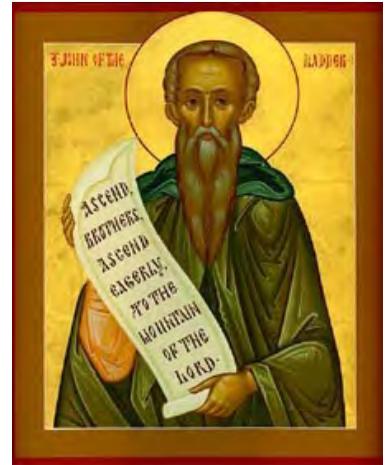
The Spirituality of the Christian East

As we enter into this Great and Holy Week, I would bring to an end my thoughts on St. John's *Ladder of Divine Assent*. His ending step on the Ladder is love. While Christ told us that by imitating God's love, mercy and forgiveness we will "be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect", we are speaking in human language that cannot adequately convey the exact truth about God, who is beyond human understanding and all human speech. For God is infinitely perfect and no matter how perfect we become, we will never enter into the essence of God. We will never become anywhere near as perfect as He is. This is why St. John describes dispassion as an uncompleted perfection of the perfect.

This applies even to the last step of the Ladder. If God is infinite, and if "God is love," then love is infinite, which means we will never reach the end of it. Even in the eternal life to come, we shall be forever increasing in love, forever plunging the infinite depths of God. Thus St. John describes love as *the progress of eternity*. He writes:

Love has no boundary, and both in the present and in the future age we will never cease to progress in it, as we add light to light.

Each step of the Ladder can be understood as a progression in divine love, and with each step we come a little closer to the Trinity. Love is not only the final step of the Ladder, but every step of our divine ascent into the Kingdom of heaven.



Thus the Ladder concludes with the voice of God, who is love, inviting us to grow ever closer to Him, truly exhorting us to climb ever higher on the Ladder of Divine Love.

We have a wonderful opportunity during this Great and Holy Week to consider St. John's *Ladder* and ask Almighty God to help us progress in our love of Him through our love of all of our neighbors. All this is for our salvation.

Rejoice at His Coming!

Let us say to Christ: *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel.* Let us hold before Him like palm branches those final words inscribed above the cross. Let us show Him honor, not with olive branches but with the splendor of merciful deeds to one another. Let us spread the thoughts and desires of our hearts under His feet like garments, so that entering us with the whole of his being, He may draw the whole of our being into Himself and place the whole of His in us. Let us say to Zion in the words of the prophet: *Have courage, daughter of Zion, do not be afraid. Behold, your king comes to you, humble and mounted on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.* He is coming who is everywhere present and pervades all things; He is coming to achieve in you His work of universal salvation. He is coming who came to call to repentance not the righteous but sinners, coming to recall those who have strayed into sin. Do not be afraid, then: *God is in the midst of you, and you shall not be shaken.*

Receive Him with open, outstretched hands, for it was on His own hands that He sketched you. Receive

Him who laid your foundations on the palms of His hands. Receive Him, for He took upon Himself all that belongs to us except sin, to consume what is ours in what is His. Be glad, city of Zion, our mother, and fear not. *Celebrate your feasts.* Glorify Him for His mercy, who has come to us in you. Rejoice exceedingly, daughter of Jerusalem, sing and leap for joy. *Be enlightened, be enlightened,* we cry to you, as holy Isaiah trumpeted, for the light has come to you and the glory of the Lord has risen over you.

And what is this *glory of the Lord*? Clearly it is the cross on which Christ was glorified, He, the radiance of the Father's glory, even as He said when He faced His passion: *Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him, and will glorify him at once.* The glory of which He speaks here is His lifting up on the cross, for Christ's glory is His cross and His exultation upon it, as He plainly says: *When I have been lifted up, I will draw all men to myself.*

St. Andrew of Crete

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