

Message from Fr. Michael....

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

Welcome to the beginning of Holy Week 2017. In the Holy Gospel of St. Mark, we read:

When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethpage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately. They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the Colt? They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

Only a few days later, the cheers were replaced with "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" How weak man is! We are to proclaim: "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" Here is our God that came in the form of a man sitting on the colt of a donkey who came to offer himself for sacrifice for the ransom of the many. The Lord did not come riding on a valiant maverick as a conqueror but instead came humbly to offer Himself as the sacrificial Paschal lamb. The palms offered would soon be replaced with crucifixion nails! This is what man offered the Lord! For even the chieftain of the Apostles, St. Peter, had denied the Lord three times before hearing the rooster crow because of fear and weakness.

We are remorseful for the ignorance of our early ancestral brethren. We now have the knowledge about our Lord that they did not have. The Prince of Peace came and changed the world. God came in the form of man to save us! Hosanna in the highest! God came to let us know that He is very much alive and well. Those who believe that He came have received the message and have been enlightened. Brothers and sisters, you are invited to come this week and share in the Lord's saving Passion by attending our Holy Week services and taking part in this blessed experience through worship. Come and be a witness for Christ! Come and witness the Holy Passions which will lead us into the triumphant Holy Resurrection of our Lord. Bring your loved ones, your neighbors, and your friends. Everyone is invited to part of this spiritual experience! Wishing you a Kali Anastasi, I remain

Yours in the service of the Passion-filled Christ,

+Fr. Michael



Palm Sunday

On Sunday, five days before the Passover of the Law, the Lord came from Bethany to Jerusalem. Sending two of His disciples to bring Him a foal of an ass, He sat thereon and entered into the city. When the multitude there heard that Jesus was coming, they straightway took up the branches of palm trees in their hands, and went forth to meet Him. Others spread their garments on the ground, and yet others cut branches from the trees and strewed them in the way that Jesus was to pass; and all of them together, especially the children, went before and after Him, crying out: "Hosanna:

Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel" (John 12:13). This is the radiant and glorious festival of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem that we celebrate today.

The branches of the palm trees symbolize Christ's victory over the devil and death. The word Hosanna means "Save, I pray," or "Save, now." The foal of an ass, and Jesus' sitting thereon, and the fact that this animal was untamed and considered unclean according to the Law, signified the former uncleanness and wildness of the nations, and their subjection thereafter to the holy Law of the Gospel.

Resurrectional Apolytikion

As by baptism we were buried with Thee, O Christ our God, so by Thy Resurrection we were deemed worthy of immortal life; and praising Thee, we cry: Hosanna in the highest; blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

The Holy Martyr Euppsychius of Caesarea

This holy Martyr was from the parts of Cappadocia, and lived a blameless life with his wife. During the reign of Julian the Apostate, this blessed one was filled with divine zeal and, with other Christians, destroyed the pagan temple dedicated to Fortune. Because of this he received the crown of martyrdom by beheading in the year 362.

Friends, families, and neighbors: Welcome to our Palm Sunday celebration! At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy today, we are having a Palm Sunday Fish Dinner/Luncheon. Please join us for this fabulous luncheon. The cost of the luncheon is a \$10 donation for adults and free for all children and we thank you and appreciate your monetary donation to help our beloved Church to offset the cost of the food. We look forward to your fellowship and may God bless everyone!

**Holy Week Schedule for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for 2017
Presiding Priest/Proistamenos: Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis**

Saturday of Lazarus, April 8th: Orthros 9 AM Divine Liturgy 10 AM
(There will be a children's breakfast served following the Liturgy and this will be followed by the making of crosses from palms afterwards)

Palm Sunday, April 9th: Orthros 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy 9:45 AM

Palm Sunday evening, April 9th: Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins
6:30 PM

Holy Monday, April 10th: Service of the Bridegroom matins 7:30 PM

Holy Tuesday, April 11th: Service of the Bridegroom matins and Hymn of Kassiani
7:00 PM

Holy Wednesday morning, April 12: Pre-sanctified Liturgy 9 AM
(Annunciation Church)

Holy Wednesday evening, April 12th: Service of the Sacrament of Holy Unction
7:00 PM (Annunciation Church), 3:00 PM (Holy Trinity Church, Binghamton)

Holy Thursday morning, April 13th: Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 9:00 AM

Holy Thursday evening, April 13th: Service of the Holy Passions of our Lord and
the 12 Gospels 6:30 PM

Holy Friday morning, April 14th: Service of the Royal Hours 9:30 AM

All are invited to assist in the flower decoration of the Epitaphios at the conclusion of this service. Fr. Michael will provide written excuses for school absences for those children who spend the day at the church.

Camp Annunciation Holy Friday Program begins with decorating the Epitaphios followed by a light Lenten lunch at 12 noon. All are encouraged to bring and share a dish to pass that conforms with the fast of Holy Friday. A JOY/HOPE meeting will be at 1 PM. All adults and children are invited to attend.

Holy Friday afternoon, April 14th: Service of Great Vespers of the
Apokathelosis (The un-nailing of our Lord from the cross) 3 PM

Holy Friday evening, April 14th: Service of the Lamentations matins
6:30 PM

Holy Saturday morning, April 15th: Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (The First Resurrection of our Lord raising Adam and Eve from the dead) 10 AM

Holy Saturday night, April 15th/April 16th: Matins of the Pascha 11:00 PM

'O Come and Receive Ye the Light...' 11:45 PM

Reading of the Gospel of the Resurrection of our Lord 12 AM midnight

followed by the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

Easter Sunday (Pascha), April 16th: Vespers service of Agape (Annunciation Church)
(The Gospel will be read in multiple languages. Please see Fr. Michael if you are
interested in reading the Gospel in ANY other language besides Greek and English)
11 AM