



■ † Palm Sunday

“...We crucify the Lord within ourselves”*

Epistle (Philippians 4:4-9)

Brethren, rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, “Rejoice!” Let your moderation be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Fret not about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you.

Gospel (St. John 12:1-18)

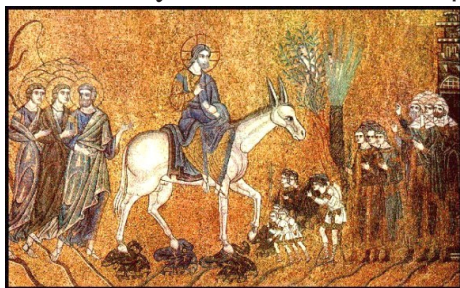
Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, who had been dead and whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son who was to betray Him, said, “Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and

given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money bag and took what was put therein. Then Jesus said, "Let her alone; against the day of My burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you, but Me ye have not always." Many people of the Jews therefore knew that He was there. And they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted, that they might put Lazarus also to death, because by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus. On the next day many people who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him and cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!" And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon, as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." These things His disciples understood not at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things unto Him. The people therefore who were with Him, when He called Lazarus out of his grave and raised him from the dead, bore record. For this cause the people also met Him, for they heard that He had done this miracle.

Who did not meet the Lord when He triumphantly entered Jerusalem as King; and who did not cry out then, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" (St. Matthew 21:15)?

Only four days passed, however, and the same crowd cried with the same tongues, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" (St. John 19:6). An amazing change!

But why should we be surprised? Do we not do the very



same thing when, upon receiving the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Lord, we hardly have left the Church when we forget everything—both our reverence and God's mercy towards us?

We give ourselves over as

before to selfish deeds, at first small and then great. Perhaps even before four days have passed, though we do not cry “Crucify Him!” yet we crucify the Lord within ourselves.

The Lord sees all of this and endures it. Glory to Thy long-suffering, O Lord!



(*) St. Theophan the Recluse, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year According to the Daily Church Readings from the Word of God.*