



Prophet Elias News

**News in the time of self –isolation for the Orthodox Church of
the Holy Prophet Elias in Devon
12th April 2020**

Palm Sunday and Holy Week



From a Sermon by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh on Palm Sunday 30th March 1980

Today Christ enters the path not only of His sufferings but of that dreadful loneliness which enshrouds Him during all the days of Passion Week. The loneliness begins with a misunderstanding; the people expect that the Lord's entry into Jerusalem will be the triumphant procession of a political leader, of a leader who will free his people from oppression, from slavery, from what they consider godlessness - because all paganism or idol-worship is a denial of the living God. The loneliness will develop further into the dreadful loneliness of not being understood even by His disciples. At the Last Supper when the Saviour talks to them for the last time, they will be in constant doubt as to the meaning of His words. And later when He goes into the Garden of Gethsemane before the fearful death that is facing Him, His closest disciples, Peter, John and James - whom He chose to go with Him - fall asleep, depressed, tired, hopeless. The culmination of this loneliness will be Christ's cry on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Abandoned by men, rejected by the people of Israel, He encounters the extreme of forsakenness and dies without God, without men, alone, with only His love for God and His love for mankind, dying for its sake and for God's glory.

During the coming days we shall be not just remembering, but be present at Christ's Passion. We shall be part of the crowd surrounding Christ and the disciples and the Mother of God. As we hear the Gospel readings, as we listen to the prayers of the Church, as one image after another of these days of the Passion passes before our eyes, let each one of us ask himself the question, "Where do I stand, who am I in this crowd? A Pharisee? A Scribe? A traitor, a coward? Who? Or do I stand among the Apostles?" But they too were overcome by fear. Peter denied Him thrice, Judas betrayed Him, John, James and Peter went to sleep just when Christ most needed human love and support; the other disciples fled; no one remained except John and the Mother of God, those who were bound to Him by the kind of love which fears nothing and is ready to share in everything.

Once more let us ask ourselves who we are and where we stand, what our position in this crowd is. Do we stand with hope, or despair, or what? And if we stand with indifference, we too are part of that terrifying crowd that surrounded Christ, shuffling, listening, and then going away; as we shall go away from church. The Crucifix will be standing here on Thursday and we shall be reading the Gospel about the Cross, the Crucifixion and death - and then what will happen? The Cross will remain standing, but we shall go away for a rest, go home to have supper, to sleep, to prepare for the fatigues of the next day. And during this time Christ is on the Cross, Christ is in the tomb. How awful it is that, like the disciples in their day, we are not able to spend one night, one hour with Him. Let us think about this, and if we are incapable of doing anything, let us at least realise who we are and where we stand, and at the final hour turn to Christ with the cry, the appeal of the thief, 'Remember me, Lord, in Thy Kingdom!' Amen.

**A selection from the many beautiful texts for Holy Week
taken from The Lenten Triodion**

Lazarus Saturday

Having completed the forty days that bring profit to our soul, we beseech Thee in Thy love for man: Grant us also to behold the Holy Week of Thy passion, that in it we may glorify Thy mighty acts and Thine ineffable dispensation for our sakes, singing with one mind: O Lord, glory to Thee.

Palm Sunday

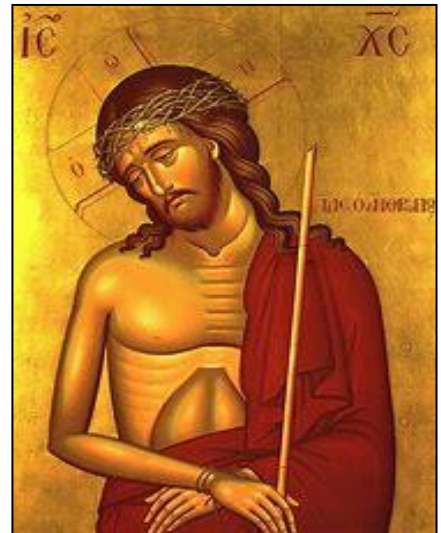
Today the grace of the Holy Spirit has gathered us together, and we all take up Thy Cross and say: Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

At the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom:

Epistle: Philippians 4: 4-9 *Gospel:* John 12: 1-8

**Matins of Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and
Thursday
– the Bridegroom Services.**

Behold, the Bridegroom cometh 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 therefore, O my soul, and be not overcome by sleep, lest thou be given over to death and shut out of the Kingdom. But return to soberness and cry aloud: Holy, holy, holy art Thou O God; through the Mother of God have mercy on us.



Expostilarion

Thy bridal chamber, O my Saviour, I see all adorned, and I have no garment that I may enter there. Enlighten the raiment of my soul, O Giver of Light, and save me.

At the Liturgy of Saint Basil on Holy Thursday

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 11: 23-32

Gospel: Matthew 26:2-20; John 13: 3-17; Matthew 26:21-39; Luke 22:43-45; Matthew 26:40-27: 2.

Troparia for Holy and Great Friday

Noble Joseph, having taken down Thy most pure body from the Tree, wrapped it in clean linen with sweet spices, and he laid it in a new tomb.

The Angel stood by the tomb, and to the women bearing spices he cried aloud: ‘Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption.’

Holy Saturday

– At the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

Epistle: Romans 6: 3-11

Gospel: Matthew 28: 1 - 20

In place of the Hymn of the Cherubim:

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and stand with fear and trembling; and let it take no thought of any earthly thing. For the King of Kings and Lord of Lords draws near to be sacrificed and given as food to the faithful. Before Him go the choirs of angels, with all the principalities and powers, the many-eyed cherubim and the six-winged seraphim, which cover their faces as they sing: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Communion Verse:

The Lord has awaked as if from sleep: He is risen and saves us. Alleluia

Celebrating Palm Sunday and Holy Week

Attached to this newsletter is a little booklet 'Holy Week from Home' published by the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America. Much of it seems to be geared towards families with younger children but (*in Ed's opinion*) there are several ideas we could all use.

Useful websites

You can find texts for all the services in Holy Week at www.oca.org/liturgics/service-texts

Fr John Whitford in America has put together all the texts for readers' versions of Holy week services here. <https://fatherjohn.blogspot.com/2020/04/holy-week-at-home-part-1.html>

Fr Stephen Platt does very nice online services on his Facebook page.

https://www.facebook.com/search/videos/?q=st.%20nicholas%20orthodox%20church%2C%20oxford&epa=SERP_TAB

Some thoughts to reflect our present situation

Been thinking a lot recently about my Russian grandmother, Maria Morozova, 'Baba'. Whilst pregnant, she fled Russia during the revolution by train from Moscow to Vladivostok. She was so malnourished that her baby, my aunt, was suckled by a goat. Also about my mother, Olga, who was interned together with Baba and my aunt in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in Java. My mother was 15 when arrested and 18 when finally released. As I potter alone but safe in my house and garden, I appreciate that I'm in a paradise they could only have dreamed of

Sonia Behr

(The annual children's camp was held on the Behr's farm near Crickhowell before it moved to its present situation)

PEOPLE WERE CREATED
TO BE LOVED.
THINGS WERE
CREATED TO BE USED.
THE WORLD IS IN CHAOS
BECAUSE THINGS ARE
BEING LOVED AND PEOPLE
BEING USED.

Ian Burnett

(A teaching colleague of Celia's who has visited St Anne's)

A Motorcycle for Father Daniel (see last edition)

Some of you may have decided to make a donation by direct bank transfer and would prefer to send in Part A of the donation form electronically. You can do this by scanning the completed form and emailing it to our treasurer at alicescorer@gmail.com

For the Next Edition.

I was thinking of displaying a montage of photographs of how people have celebrated Holy Week and Pascha for us all to share (not everyone has access to Facebook!). So it would be lovely if you could send me some photo (as jpegs) to celia.olsson.art@gmail.com