



**Orthodox Church of the
Entrance of the Theotokos
into the Temple**

**306 W. Main Street
Emmitsburg, MD 21727**

**The V. Rev. Elias Yelovich,
Rector**

<http://EntranceMission.org>

The King of Glory Comes to Us in Humility
April 9, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Thy Long-Suffering, O Lord; Glory to Thee!

Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (John 12:31-32)

These words were spoken by our Lord shortly after His entrance into Jerusalem on this day, Palm Sunday. They are remarkable words when we think of them. The events of this weekend were truly remarkable! He is summoned to the house of Mary and Martha upon the death of their beloved brother, Lazarus. When He gets there to discover that Lazarus has already been dead for four days, in a wondrous expression of faith, Martha says with utter confidence, *Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died; and still, I know that whatever you ask of the Father, will be granted.* And then, after our Lord raises Lazarus from the dead, the seventh and greatest miracle, or sign, as St. Johns calls it, He enters Jerusalem. The people greet Him with praises, "Hosanna!" They acclaim Him the King of Israel, and they lay before Him branches and palms, the symbol of Maccabean Jewish nationalism. They recognize the symbol of His entrance, riding on the foal of an ass, prophesized by Zechariah, but I wonder if they understood that His kingship was different from what they expected? I wonder if they knew that He came to them as the ancient prophet had said in gentleness? I wonder if they understood as He had said so clearly before that His Kingdom was not of this world? That He was indeed King, but not only of Israel, but of all peoples who every lived, then and eternally?

Soon after He entered, St. John tells us that He was once again with His friends Mary and Martha, and this time it was Mary, who demonstrated her faith in Him, by pouring out upon His feet precious ointment of pure nard, an ointment reserved for use in embalming. Jesus tells those who object to the use of the costly ointment that she was anointing Him for His death. And then, immediately thereafter, Jesus says the words I quoted earlier when some Gentiles come seeking after Him: *Now the ruler of this world will be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.* It is only by ascending the Cross as the one, eternal sacrifice for the Life of the World, that we can and would be drawn to Him. It is only through His gentle humility, His self-giving, His sacrifice for us, that we would come to love Him.

St. John understood this, and He emphasizes this in His Gospel repeatedly. He understood that no one could ever be drawn in love and devotion to God out of fear, or awe. We might respect God if we see or experience His divine majesty; we might even obey Him out of fear of retribution. But we could never love Him if our relationship is based on fear. It is only when we see Him lifted up upon the Cross for our eternal salvation, that we could and will love Him.

Palm Sunday, Brothers and Sisters, is such a wondrous day, part of a whole series of observances that bring us face to face with the self-giving humility of our God. It all begins today as we hear of our Lord and God and Savior entering the holy city as a King in humility and gentleness. We will see that same gentleness, that same humility, on Thursday when we gather to remember His Last Supper – how He girds Himself with a towel and bows before His disciples like a common servant to wash their feet. And then on Friday, when He is lifted up on the Cross in the glory of self-giving, as the ultimate sacrifice of God for the Life of the World, we will understand that there is no limit to what the Lord our God will do and has done for our reclamation, our redemption.

This Day is the threshold to the Mystery of our Salvation. The One Who enters Jerusalem enters as King to be sure, but He enters in gentleness, in humility and self-giving for the Life of the World! Brothers and Sisters, let us see and understand! And like the children of old, let us acclaim Him: “Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna to the King of Peace, the King who enters in Humility; the One Who gives His Life for the Life of the World!” And let us love Him with heart and soul!
To Jesus Christ alone be all honor and glory forever! Amen!

Fr. Elias

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717-817-0084