

The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)

15 / 28 April

Extracts from the Vigil Service:

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.

Today the Word and co-eternal Son of God the Father, whose throne is the heaven and whose footstool is the earth, humbles Himself and comes to Bethany, seated on a dumb beast, on a foal. Then the children of the Hebrews, holding branches in their hands, praise Him saying: 'Hosanna in the highest: blessed is He that comes, the King of Israel'.

Let us also come today, all the new Israel, the Church of the Gentiles, and let us cry with the Prophet Zechariah: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem; for behold, thy King comes unto thee: He is meek and brings salvation, and He rides upon the colt of an ass, the foal of a beast of burden. Keep the feast with the children, and holding branches in your hands sing His praises: Hosanna to the highest; blessed is He that comes, the King of Israel.



1st, 2nd 3rd Stichera of 'Lord, I have cried'

Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem, or Palm Sunday, Troparion, Tone I — Thou didst give a pledge of the general resurrection before Thy Passion, O Christ our God, by raising Lazarus from the dead. Therefore, we too, like the children, carry the symbols of victory and cry to Thee, the Vanquisher of death: Hosanna in the Heights! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord.

Another Troparion, Tone IV — As by Baptism we were buried with Thee, O Christ our God, so by Thy Resurrection we were granted immortal life, and praising Thee, we cry: Hosanna in the Heights! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord.

Kontaklon, Tone VI — On the throne in heaven and riding a colt on earth, O Christ our God, Thou didst receive the praise of Angels and the chorus of the children who cried to Thee: Blessed art Thou Who comest to recall Adam.

Matins Gospel: Matthew 21:1-11, 15-17

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

IF THERE IS ANY VIRTUE AND ... ANYTHING PRAISEWORTHY—MEDITATE ON THESE THINGS

It is possible to grieve for our own sins and yet to rejoice in Christ. Or when your communion with God is not hindered, rejoice ...Is it best to envy, or to rejoice with one another? Let us search out all these things, and we will find that virtue, like a truly kind mother, places us in safety, while vice is a treacherous thing and full of danger ...That which is 'honourable' belongs to external virtue and that which is 'pure' to the soul ...If we will be at peace with each other, God will be with us ...Therefore we must make a beginning on our part, and then we will draw God towards us ...For he 'who digs a pit for his neighbour, falls into it' (Prov. 26:27) ...As we injure ourselves when we injure our neighbours, so by benefiting them, we benefit ourselves.

St. John Chrysostom. Homily XIV on Philippians IV. B#57, pp. 246, 248, 249.

Gospel - John 12: 1-18

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, 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 very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii 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 box; and he used to take what was put in it. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always." Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus. The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!" Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt." His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.

PALM SUNDAY

Throughout the entire history of the known world, men have conquered other men. Rulers have conquered cities. Emperors have conquered entire nations. At times, Kings have strived to conquer the entire world. But there remains one uncharted territory that has eluded men of power all throughout history. This unconquered territory is the human heart, and its sole conqueror is Christ the king.

Today we celebrate together one of the great feasts of the Church calendar- the feast of Palm Sunday. Today we gather together to celebrate Christ's entry into the city of Jerusalem. Today we celebrate Christ as the king who enters our own personal Jerusalem- our hearts. Today's feast day is a momentary feast of joy and celebration, because tonight we begin the final leg of our journey towards Pascha. Our mood changes from one of joy this morning to one of solemnity, almost of sorrow this evening as we lead up to the great sacrifice that Christ performed for us on the cross.

The feast of Palm Sunday has been celebrated in our Church since the earliest days of Christianity, but the use of Palms in connection with religious celebrations goes all the way back to Old Testament times. Oddly enough Palm trees did not grow around the city of Jerusalem, and people would often buy imported Palms for religious celebrations, in particular The Feast of Tabernacles celebrated at the temple in Jerusalem. The Palm branch was used as a visual tool proclaiming the sovereignty of God as the true king of the Israelites.

With the expectation of the Messiah, and the events of Christ's ministry on earth, word travelled quickly around Judea that Jesus was the one whom the prophets had spoken about and whom everyone was expecting. Yesterday Christ performed a miracle by raising Lazarus from the dead, the miracle that foreshadowed his glorious resurrection next Sunday. Now everyone is convinced that this is the Messiah-king who will save the Israelites. And Christ fulfils the prophecy of Zachariah, entering Jerusalem on a donkey. All of Israel is preparing to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, and Christ enters also as the salvific king who will save Israel not from the tyranny of the Roman Empire, but from the curse of death through His own death and resurrection.

For Orthodox Christians around the world, we celebrate these events as they happened not only in the past, but as they also happen today. We celebrate Christ as the king who enters our hearts, our own personal Jerusalem. But is Christ able to enter? Is there room in our hearts for Christ to rule as king? Often the doors of our hearts are locked. Often Christ is unable to enter because there is already another king of the heart — ourselves. And how do we solve this problem of trying to let Christ in? How do we instil within ourselves the one thing that is missing- God?

The answer is to surrender. Surrender to the will of God. Surrender your life to the one who gave you life. We are constantly bound and held captive by the temporal things of this life. We are prisoners of our own selves, of this world, of our careers, of money, of the politicians who rule over us, we are even slaves to our own passions. The only way to find peace, to find true happiness, to experience true love is to surrender yourself to God, to make Him your king, to live in total communion with Him. And the way in which we turn our hearts from the kingdom of the self into the kingdom of God is through constant daily prayer, reflection, and meditation, frequent Holy Communion, frequent Confession, reading and understanding the Scriptures. So many people complain that they can't find time to come to Church, they can't find time to pray and read the Scriptures, they can't find time to fast, or go to Confession and Holy Communion. The reason they don't have time is that they are slaves to their own selves, to their own will. If we don't have time for God, then why on earth should God have any time for us? But God always has time for us. He is constantly knocking at the door to our hearts, to our lives and asking to come in.

Some of the Church Fathers go so far as to liken God to a crazed lover who constantly seeks to be with the one that He loves- us, and who would do absolutely anything to be with the people that He loves.

Today, as we receive our Palm branches at the end of the Divine Liturgy, let us take them to our homes and place them somewhere where we can always see them. Let the Palms remind us that Christ is the king of our families, that Christ is the king of our hearts, that Christ is the only true answer to happiness and meaning in our lives. And if we do proclaim Christ as our king, let us try and make time for Him in our daily life, let us be reminded that He is the one with whom we will be spending eternity. Let us be reminded that our careers, our education, our finances, our homes, all of the basic material needs in our lives are only temporary. Let us prioritise and place Christ the king as the primary concern in our lives. It is only when we have done this that we will find true peace and happiness in such a confused and complex world. Amen.

Saints of the Week

15 / 28 April —The Holy Apostles Aristarchus, Pudens and Trophimus - These were all numbered among the Seventy. Aristarchus was Bishop of Apamea in Syria. The Apostle Paul mentions him several times (Acts 19:29; Col. 4:10; Philem. v.24). He was seized in Ephesus, together with Gaius, by a mob that had risen up against Paul. The Apostle wrote to the Colossians: 'Aristarchus my fellow-prisoner saluteth you', and, in the Epistle to Philemon, Paul calls Aristarchus 'my fellow-labourer', together with Mark, Demas and Lucas. Pudens was an eminent Roman citizen. The Apostle Paul mentions him once (II Tim. 4:21). Pudens' house was first the refuge of the chief apostles and was then turned into a church dedicated to the Good Shepherd. Trophimus was an Asian (Acts 20:4), and accompanied St Paul on his journeys. In one place, Paul writes: 'Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick (II Tim. 4:21). During Nero's persecution, when the Apostle Paul was beheaded, these glorious martyrs were also beheaded

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr Alexander priest (1930). Martyrs Basilissa and Anastasia of Rome, disciples of Apostles Peter and Paul (1st c.). Martyr Suchias and his companions: Andrew, Anastasius, Thalaleus, Theodoretus, Ivchirion, Jordan, Quadratus, Lucian, Mimnenos, Nerangius, Polyeuctus, James, Phocas, Domentianus, Victor, and Zosima (Chorimos), in Armenia (123). Martyr Sabbas the Goth of Buzau in Wallachia (Romania) (372). St. Mstislav Theodore, prince of Kiev (1132). Venerable Ruadhan, founder and abbot of Lothra, Ireland (ca. 584) (Celtic & British). St. Leonidas, bishop of Athens (Greek). St. Basil of Poiana Marului (1767). St. Daniel of Achinsk, Siberia (1843). Martyr Pausilipus of Thrace (2nd c.). Martyr Crescens of Myra (3rd c.). St. Paternus, bishop of Llandbadarn

16 / 29 April — The Holy Martyrs Agapia, Chionia and Irene - They were sisters from the region of Aquileia. When the Emperor Diocletian was staying in Aquileia, he ordered that the famous spiritual guide, Chrysogonus, be executed. An old priest named Zoilus received a vision in which he was shown where the body of Chrysogonus lay unburied. The old man hurried off, found the body of the martyr, placed it in a coffin and carried it to his home. On the thirtieth day after that, St Chrysogonus appeared to him and told him that the three maidens would be martyred in the next nine days, and that he, Zoilus, would himself enter into rest during that time. Anastasia the Seer also received the same tidings in a vision sent by Chrysogonus, who had been her teacher. The elder Zoilus did indeed find his rest after nine days, and the three sisters were brought to trial before the Emperor. The Emperor urged the holy maidens to worship idols, but they all refused, confessing their firm faith in Christ.

Irene told the Emperor that it was ridiculous to bow down to things made of wood and stone, made to order at an agreed price by the hands of a mortal man. The furious Emperor flung them into prison. Now, when the Emperor travelled to Macedonia, he took all his slaves and servants with him, including the three sisters. He gave them to Dulcitus, a general, for torture. Inflamed with a dark passion, he desired to defile the maidens, but, when he tried to go into the prison, he lost his mind and fell upon the pots and cauldrons in front of the gate, embracing and kissing them, and was completely blackened with soot. When the Emperor heard of this happening, he ordered another general to undertake the trial of the sisters. After terrible torture, the judge condemned the first two sisters to death by fire, but kept Irene for a time, hoping to defile her. But, when he sent Irene to the brothel along with some soldiers, an angel of God turned the soldiers back and led her out onto a high hill. The next day the general went out to the hill with his soldiers and, being unable to climb it, ordered that Irene be shot at with arrows. St Anastasia gathered all three bodies together in one place and gave them burial. They suffered for Christ their King and Lord in about 304.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Leonidas, Chariessa, Nice, Galina, Callista (Calisa), Nunechia, Basilissa, Theodora, and Irene of Corinth (250). The Weeping Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Ilyin Chernigov" (1658) and "Tambov" Icon (1692). Venerable Theodora-Bassa, princess of Novgorod (1378). Martyr Irene of Greece. New Martyr Michael of Smyrna (1772). Martyrs Felix the bishop, Januarius the priest, Fortunatus and Septimus of Lycaonia (304). St. John, blessed fool-for-Christ's sake of Verkhoturye (1701). St. Fructuosus of Braga in Iberia. Monk-martyr Christopher of Dionysiou, Mt. Athos, who suffered at Adrianople (1818).

17 / 30 April — The Hieromartyr Simeon, Bishop in Persia - In the time of the wicked King Savori, or Sapor, Simeon was tortured for Christ together with two of his priests, Audel and Ananias. The King's eunuch, Ustazan, who had first denied Christ but then, moved by the reprimand of St Simeon, again confessed the true Faith before the King, was executed before they were. A thousand other Christians were also led to execution with St Simeon, who purposely stood a little back so that he should be the last to die, and so be able to encourage the other Christians right to the end and keep them from wavering through fear of death. When the priest Ananias laid his head on the block, he was trembling all over. But the King's clerk, Fusik, who was himself secretly a Christian, began to encourage him, saying: 'Don't be frightened, old man. Shut your eyes and be a man, and you'll see the divine light.' As soon as he had said this, it was seen that he was a Christian and he was denounced to the King. The King wore him down with harsh tortures, and also his daughter, the maiden Asktria. St Simeon was eventually beheaded, after having seen his flock into the other world. The following year, on Great Friday, the King's beloved eunuch, Azat, was slain for Christ, along with another thousand of the faithful. Then the King grieved for his eunuch and gave up killing any more Christians. They all suffered with honour for Christ their King and Lord in about 341.

St Acacius, Bishop of Melitene - lived the ascetical life in the place where he was born, i.e., in Melitene, Armenia. Blessed Otreius, bishop of that city, who participated at the Second Ecumenical Council [Constantinople 381 A.D.], ordained him a presbyter. Following the death of Otreius, Acacius became a bishop. He participated at the Third Ecumenical Council [Ephesus 431 A.D.], which condemned the evil blasphemy of Nestorius against the Mother of God. Here, together with St. Cyril of Alexandria, Acacius zealously fought for the purity of the Orthodox Faith. St. Acacius possessed much Grace from God and worked many miracles. After long and zealous service to God, Acacius died peacefully in the year 435 A.D.; St Agapetus, Pope of Rome; Our Holy Fathers Sabbatius and Zossima.

Holy Martyr Donan, an Irish monk of Iona under Columba & 52 monks with him at his monastery on the Isle of Eigg - Inner Hebrides, Scotland - while the monks were celebrating Liturgy on Easter night 618 a gang of robbers, possibly Vikings, arrived on the island and herded the monks into the refectory and set fire to it. Those who tried to escape were killed by the sword. At least eleven Scottish churches bear his name.

Also commemorated on this day: Martyrs Abdechalas and Ananias presbyters, Usthazanes, Fusicus (Pusicius), Ascitrea, and Azat the Eunuch (341). Venerable Zosimas of Solovki (1478). New Hieromartyr John priest (1918). New Hieromartyr Michael confessor, priest (1935). New Hieromartyr Theodore priest (1942). Uncovering of the relics (1641) of Venerable Alexander of

Svir (1533). Martyr Adrian of Corinth (151). St. Paisius, fool-for-Christ of Kiev (1893). St. Agapitus, pope of Rome (536). Venerable Macarius of Corinth (1805). St. Ephraim the Great of Mtskheta Monastery (9th c.) (Georgia).

18 April / 1 May — Our Holy Father John - He was a disciple of St Gregory of Decapolis. In the time of the iconoclast heresy, the Emperor Leo the Armenian put John to torture, together with his teacher, Gregory, and Joseph the Hymnographer. When Gregory finished his earthly course, John became abbot of the Decapolite monastery in Constantinople. Becoming abbot, he intensified his asceticism for the sake of the Kingdom of God. He died peacefully in about 820. After his death, St Joseph buried him near the grave of St Gregory.

The Holy Martyr John the New of Ioannina - born in Ioannina, once the capitol city of the Emperor Pyrrhus. When his impoverished parents died, the young John moved to Constantinople and there continued his occupation, for he was a craftsman. Not long before that, the Turks surrounded Constantinople and many Christians, out of fear, denied Christ and embraced the Islamic faith. St. John had his workshop in the midst of these converts to Islam. The more the young John burned with love for Christ the Lord, the more openly he exposed himself as a Christian before these traitors of Christ. He began to argue with them about faith and, finally, rebuked them for their betrayal of Christ. They dragged him before the judge and falsely accused John, alleging that he had earlier embraced Islam, and that he again reverted to Christianity. After he was tortured and beaten with rods and iron ramrods, they cast him into prison. The next day was the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ and, again, they brought him out for further torture and John emerged singing: "Christ is risen from the dead!" To his torturers, he bravely said: " Do what you want in order to send me as soon as possible from this transient life to eternal life. I am Christ's slave, I follow Christ, for Christ I die that I may live with Him!" After that, John was bound in chains and brought to the place of burning. Upon seeing a large fire prepared for him, John ran and leaped into the flames. His torturers seeing how he loved death in the fire removed him from the fire and sentenced him to be beheaded. After they beheaded him, they threw his head and body into the fire. Later on, Christians leafed through the ashes and gathered some of the remains of his honourable and wonder-working relics and interred them in the Great Church [Agia Sophia - Church of the Holy Wisdom] in Constantinople. Thus, St. John of Ioannina died a martyr's death and received the glorious martyr's wreath on April 18, 1526 A. D.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr Bessarion priest (1918). New Hieromartyrs Priests Nicholas (1937) and Basil (Derzhavin) (1930) and lay people of the city of Gorodets, Nizhni-Novgorod. Virgin-martyr Tamara (1942). Martyrs Victor, Zoticus, Zeno, Acindynus, and Severian of Nicomedia (ca. 303). Venerable Cosmas, bishop of Chalcedon, and his fellow-ascetic Venerable Auxentius (815-820). "Maximov" Icon of the Mother of God (1299). Venerable Euthymius the Enlightener of Karelia (1435), and Venerables Anthony and Felix of St. Nicholas Monastery in Karelia. Monks John and Athanasius of Aegina (Greek). St. Naucratius, abbot of the Studion (848). St. Athanasia the Wonderworker of Aegina (9th c.). St. Basil Ratisvili of the Holy Mountain (13th c.) (Georgia). Martyr Sabbas the Goth

19 April / 2 May — Our Holy Father John of the Ancient Caves - lived a life of asceticism in the so-called "old caves," the "old Lavra" of Chariton the Great in Palestine. Having loved Christ the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul and with all his mind, John, at an early age, began to travel to the holy places and to listen to the instructions and counsels of the holy men. Finally, he settled in the Caves of Chariton, where he gave himself to rigorous asceticism spending days and years in fasting, prayer, vigils, continuously meditating on death, and teaching himself humility. As a good ripened fruit, he was plucked by death and took up habitation in Paradise. He lived and died in the eighth century;

The Holy Martyrs Christopher, Theonas and Antoninus - young officers serving under Emperor Diocletian. When St. George the Great Martyr was being tortured, they witnessed his sufferings as well as the miracles which occurred at that time. Seeing all of this, they came before the emperor, laid down their arms, removed their military belts and bravely confessed the Name of the Lord Jesus. For that, they were subjected to great torture and finally were tossed into the fire, where their bodies were consumed while their souls went to God into eternal joy. They honourably suffered in Nicomedia in the year 303 A.D.;

St Tryphun, Patriarch of Constantinople - The Emperor Romanus, who reigned over Byzantium at the beginning of the tenth century had a son, Theophylact, who was sixteen years

old when Patriarch Stephen died. The emperor wanted his son to be elevated as patriarch for he had promised him [his son] this spiritual calling from his youth. Because his son was a minor, the emperor was ashamed to do this. The patriarchal throne was assumed by Tryphun a simple but chaste and pious old man. Tryphun remained on the throne for three years. When the son of the emperor reached his twentieth year, the emperor thought, to remove Tryphun at any price and to install his son as patriarch. The saint of God, Tryphun, did not want to relinquish his throne voluntarily, for no other reason, because he considered it to be a great scandal that such a young man be elevated to such a responsible and burdensome position as that of being patriarch. Through the intrigue of a nefarious bishop, the signature of the innocent Tryphun was extracted on a blank sheet of paper. Later on, in the imperial court, above that signature, the alleged resignation of the patriarch was written which the emperor decreed. As a result of this, there arose a great confusion in the Church, for the laity and the clergy stood by Tryphun, the godly man. The emperor then forcibly removed the aged patriarch and sent him to a monastery and, his son, Theophylact, was elevated as patriarch. St. Tryphun lived as an ascetic in this monastery for two years and five months and presented himself before the Lord in the year 933 A.D.

Hieromartyr Alphege, archbishop of Canterbury (1012) - he became a monk at Deerhurst but after some years retired to be a hermit in Somerset. In 984 he became bishop of Winchester and he became known for his personal austerity and lavish almsgiving. In 994 King Ethelred sent him to parley with the Danes Anlaf and Swein, who had raided both London and Wessex. The Anglo-Saxons paid tribute but Anlaf became a Christian and promised he would never again come to England 'with warlike intent.' This promise was kept. In 1006 he succeeded Aelfric as archbishop of Canterbury. Meanwhile the Danes continued to overrun southern England. They besieged Canterbury and imprisoned Alphege and others and demanded a ransom of 3000 pounds. Alphege refused to pay and forbade his people to do so. The Danes were so infuriated that, after a feast at which they got drunk, and killed him with the bones of oxen: an axeman delivered the final blow. His was originally buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, London however in 1023 his body was translated to Canterbury Cathedral. In 1105 his body was found to be incorrupt.

Also commemorated on this day: St. Matrona the Blind of Moscow (1952). New Hieromartyr Victor, bishop of Glazov (1934). New Hieromartyr Demetrius priest (1942). Hieromartyr Paphnutius of Jerusalem. St. George the Confessor, bishop of Antioch in Pisidia (813-820). Venerable Nicephorus, abbot of Katabad. Venerable Symeon the Barefoot of Philotheou Monastery, Mt. Athos. Finding of the relics (1621) of Venerable Joachim, abbot of Oepochka (Pskov) (1515). Venerable Joasaph (Bolotov) of Alaska. New Martyr Agathangelus of Esphigmenou Monastery, Mt. Athos (1819) (Greek). Martyrs Theodore, his mother Philippa and two soldiers, Socrates and Dionysius at Perge in Pamphylia (2nd c.)

20 April / 3 May — Our Holy Father Theodore Trichinas - A citizen of Constantinople, he was the son of wealthy parents. He left parents, home and riches while still a young man and settled in a remote monastery in Thrace, where he undertook the most rigorous ascetic life. He slept on a stone so that he might have less sleep; he was always bareheaded and dressed in a hair-shirt, from which he was called 'Trichinas' or 'hairy'. Because of his great and self-inflicted sufferings for the sake of his soul's salvation, God granted him the gift of working miracles, both in his lifetime and after his death, and he died peacefully in about 400. Healing myrrh flowed from his relics.

The Holy Apostle Zacchaeus - At first, Zacchaeus was a tax collector and a sinner. When our Lord saw him in Jericho in a tree and entered his home, Zacchaeus was brought to repentance. Later on, Zacchaeus followed the Apostle Peter who appointed him bishop of Caesarea in Palestine where he faithfully served the Gospel and died peacefully; Blessed Anastasius the Sinaite, Patriarch of Antioch; Blessed Gregory, Patriarch of Antioch; Our Holy Father Anastasius of Sinai; Our Holy Father Athanasius of Meteora;

St. Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons (689) - he became king by conquest being notoriously violent but then abdicated and went to Rome to become a Christian. He was baptised on Holy Saturday 689 being given the name Peter by Pope Sergius. Soon afterwards he was taken ill and died, still wearing his white baptismal robes. He was aged 30.

Also commemorated on this day: New Hieromartyr Theodosius, bishop of Kolomensk (1937). Translation of the relics (1991) of St. Nicholas (Velimirovich) of Ochrid and Zhicha (1956) from

America to Serbia. Venerable Alexander (Oshevsky), abbot, near Onega Lake (1479). Child-martyr Gabriel of Slutsk (Poland) (1690). Sts. Gregory (593) and Anastasius (599), Patriarchs of Antioch. Venerable Anastasius, abbot of Sinai (685). St. Nicholas (Velimirovich), bishop of Ochrid and Zhicha, Serbia (1956) (Serbia). "Cyprus" (392) and "Keepiazh" Icons of the Mother of God. Venerables Athanasius (1380) and Ioasaph (1423) of Meteora, abbots. Sts. Betran and Theotimus I, bishop of Tomis in Scythia Minor (410) (Romania). Blessed Anastasius I (599), patriarch of Antioch. Hieromartyr Anastasius II, patriarch of Antioch (610).

April 21 / May 4 — The Hieromartyr Januarius and those with him - This saint was Bishop of Benevento in Italy. In the time of a persecution under Maximian, he was brought before the judge and tormented with various tortures, which he endured patiently. When they threw him into the flames, they were cooled by an invisible dew and the martyr stood uninjured in it and sang the praises of God. Then they flayed his body with iron flails until the bones showed white, but the martyr patiently endured all. His deacon, Faustus, and his reader, Desiderius, were watching the torture and wept for their spiritual father. Then they too were bound and taken with their bishop to the town of Pozzuoli, and cast into prison. There were in the same prison for the sake of Christ the Puetolian deacons Proclus and Sossus and two simple, Christian men, Eutychius and Acutius. All seven were thrown next day to the wild beasts, but the beasts would not touch them. They were all then beheaded, and the Christians of the city of Naples secretly took the body of St Januarius to their city and buried it in the church. To this present day innumerable wonders are worked at this saint's grave. One among many remembered is this: a poor widow, whose only son had died, took the icon of St Januarius out of the church and laid it on her dead son, weeping and imploring the saint's aid, and her son was restored to life. St Januarius suffered with honour in 305; The Holy Martyr Theodore;

St. Beuno, abbot of Clynnog Fawr, England (c.640) - born and educated in Herefordshire before founding his main monastery. When he died a stone oratory was built over his tomb; later his relics were translated to a new church (Eglwys y Bedd) where miracles were reported. He is considered to be the most important local saint of North Wales. Remains of the primitive oratory were excavated in 1914.

St. Maelrubba (642-722) Apostle of the Picts - born in Ireland he became a monk at Bangor; later founded a monastery at Applecross on the west coast of Scotland. From there he evangelised Skye and penetrated as far north as Loch Broom. He also build a church on an island in Loch Maree, where his spring was famous for its healing properties.

St. Ethilwald, hermit of Farne (d. 699) - he was a monk and a priest of Ripon, who succeeded Cuthbert in the Inner Farne hermitage in 687. Almost nothing is known of him. Once Guthrid, the future abbot, with two monks of Lindisfarne, visited him by boat; on the return journey they were saved from shipwreck in a sudden storm by his prayers. Many miracles have been reported due to his intercession.

Also commemorated on this day: Hieromartyr Theodore of Perge in Pamphylia, his mother Philippa, and Martyrs Dioscorus, Socrates, and Dionysius (2nd c.). Uncovering of the relics (1999) of St. Theodore of Sanaxar (1791). St. Alexis, priest of Bortsumany, Nizhni-Novgorod (1848). New Hieromartyr John priest (1918). St. Nicholas confessor, priest (1933). New Hieromartyr Alexis priest (1938). New Hieromartyr Protopresbyter Basil Martysz of Teratyn (Chelm and Podlasie, Poland) (1945). Martyrs Isaacius, Apollo, and Codratus of Nicomedia (303). St. Maximus (Maximian), patriarch of Constantinople (434). The Mozdok Icon of the Mother of God. Martyr Alexandra the Empress (303). Venerable Jakov (James) of Stromynsk. St. Niphon, bishop of Novgorod (Kiev Caves). St. Anastasius of Sinai (beg. of 8th c.)

‡ Daily Scripture Readings ‡

Monday - Matthew 21: 18-43; Matthew 24: 3-35

Tuesday - Matthew 22: 15-23:39; Matthew 24: 36-26:2

Wednesday - John 12: 17-50; Matthew 26: 6-16

Thursday - Luke 22: 1-39; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-32; Matthew 26: 21-39; John 13: 3-17; Matthew 26: 21-39; Luke 22: 43-45; Matthew 26: 40-27:2; John 13: 1-11; John 13: 12-17

Friday - John 13:31-18:1 (Matins, 1st Passion Gospel) John 18:1-28 (Matins, 2nd Passion Gospel) Matthew 26:57-75 (Matins, 3rd Passion Gospel) John 18:28-19:16 (Matins, 4th Passion Gospel) Matthew 27:3-32 (Matins, 5th Passion Gospel) Mark 15:16-32 (Matins, 6th Passion Gospel) Matthew 27:33-54 (Matins, 7th Passion Gospel) Luke 23:32-49 (Matins, 8th Passion Gospel) John 19:25-37 (Matins, 9th Passion Gospel) Mark 15:43-47 (Matins, 10th Passion Gospel) John 19:38-42 (Matins, 11th Passion Gospel) Matthew 27:62-66 (Matins, 12th Passion Gospel) Galatians 6:14-18 (Royal Hours - 1st Hour) Matthew 27:1-56 (Royal Hours - 1st Hour) Romans 5:6-11 (Royal Hours - 3rd Hour) Mark 15:16-41 (Royal Hours - 3rd Hour) Hebrews 2:11-18 (Royal Hours - 6th Hour) Luke 23:32-49 (Royal Hours - 6th Hour) Hebrews 10:19-31 (Royal Hours - 9th Hour) John 18:28-19:37 (Royal Hours - 9th Hour); 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:2; Matthew 27:1-44; Luke 23:39-43; Matthew 27:45-54; John 19:31-37; Matthew 27:55-61

Saturday - 1 Corinthians 5: 6-8; Galatians 3: 13-14; Matthew 27: 62-66; Romans 6: 3-11; Matthew 28: 1-20

The Passion Gospels:

- 1) Jn. 13:31-18:1 (Farewell conversation of the Savior with His disciples and His high-priestly prayer for them).5
- 2) Jn. 18:1-28 (the Seizure of the Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane and His suffering at the hands of the high priest Annas).
- 3) Mt. 26:57-75. (Suffering of the Savior at the hands of the high priest Caiaphas and Peter's denial of Christ).
- 4) Jn. 18:28-19:16 (Suffering of the Lord in the court of Pilate).
- 5) Mt. 27:3-32 (The despair of Judas by the new suffering of the Lord by Pilate and the judgment for His crucifixion).
- 6) Mk. 15:16-32 (Leading the Lord to Golgotha and his suffering on the cross).
- 7) Mt. 27:33-54 (The continuation of the narrative about the Lord's suffering on the cross, the wonderful signs accompanying His death).
- 8) Lk. 23:32-49 (The Prayer of the Savior on the cross for His enemies and the repentance of the wise thief).
- 9) Jn. 19:25-37 (Words of the Savior from the cross to the Theotokos and Apostle John and the repetition of the narrative of His death and perforation).
- 10) Mk. 15:43-47 (Removal of the body of the Lord from the cross).
- 11) Jn. 19:38-42 (Participation of Nicodemus and Joseph in the burial of the Savior).
- 12) Mt. 27:62-66 (Posting of the guards at the tomb of the Savior and the sealing of the tomb)

.S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900)

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