

On this, Palm Sunday, the Gospel reading is John 12:1-18. After Christ went to Bethany and raised Lazarus from the dead, many learned about His great miracle. They came to see Jesus Christ and to see Lazarus with their own eyes, who was raised four days after his death. The next day, Jesus Christ went to Jerusalem, and the crowd of people welcomed Him with branches of palm trees proclaiming, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

Dearest ones, we begin the last part of the Paschal journey this week with Christ’s entrance into Jerusalem. What do the palm branches symbolize? Why are they significant when we speak about Christ? The palm branch from ancient times represents victory, triumph, peace and eternal life. Therefore, when the people, especially the children, saw Jesus Christ enter they recognized that he was the anointed one—the Messiah and welcomed Him royally.

Not only did they use palms, but they exclaimed with their voices, “Hosanna in the highest, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” Hosanna, in Hebrew Ushana, is an expression of praise and joy; it also means “Save, now”. The people recognizing his Messiahship, opened their hearts asking to be saved!

Saint Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians 4:4-9, that we should rejoice in the Lord always for the Lord is “at hand”. Let us take these words, this day, every day and moving towards Pascha do so without “anxiety for anything” for Christ has destroyed death by death, granting eternal life to us all! Blessed Resurrection!