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Transfiguration Church celebrates Palm Sunday with Archbishop Elpidophoros in Corona, NY



The community of Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church in Corona, New York welcomed His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America on Sunday, April 5, for Orthros and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy of Palm Sunday. Celebrating alongside His Eminence was Proistamenos the V. Rev. Arch. Chrysostom Panos.

For the Transfiguration community, the occasion carried special significance, as this year marks the 100th anniversary of the parish's founding. His Eminence noted the particular joy of celebrating a feast of triumph and victory alongside a community that has itself overcome great trials, including a fire nearly nine years ago that caused extensive damage to the church, and which the community met with resilience and renewal befitting their parish's name.



Photo by Orthodox Observer/Dimitrios Panagos

In his homily, the Archbishop reflected on the difference between the crowds who lined the road from Bethany to Jerusalem and the faithful gathered in Corona on this Palm Sunday. Those who welcomed the Lord with palms and shouts of praise were expecting a political deliverance from Roman occupation, and when it did not come, their fervor quickly turned. The Orthodox faithful, His Eminence said, cry out with a deeper understanding.

“We see today—Palm Sunday—as the foretaste of the glory to come,” Archbishop Elpidophoros said, “Not only by the Lord’s Triumphant Entry into the Holy City of Jerusalem, but because of the miracle of the raising of Lazaros, which promises τὴν κοινὴν Ἀνάστασιν–the shared, or common, Resurrection to all humanity.”

The Archbishop reminded the faithful that the Lord does not come to free humanity from one political power only to see another take its place. “He is Coming to liberate us from sin, from hatred, and above all else, from death,” His Eminence said. “His Victory will not be from a weapon of war, but from the Ὅπλον Εἰρήνης – the Weapon of Peace, His Most Precious and Life-Giving Cross.”

> Read His Eminence’s full homily here

On the Sunday before the Feast of Great and Holy Pascha and at the beginning of

Holy Week, the Orthodox Church celebrates one of its most joyous feasts of the year. Palm Sunday is the commemoration of the Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem following His glorious miracle of raising Lazaros from the dead. Having anticipated His arrival and having heard of the miracle, the people went out to meet the Lord and welcomed Him with displays of honor and shouts of praise. On this day, we receive and worship Christ in this same manner, acknowledging Him as our King and Lord.

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