14/04/2020

H.E. Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Franscisco – Palm Sunday Reflection 2020



My beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord,

Today, Palm Sunday, we remember how the crowds greeted Christ Jesus as he entered into Jerusalem, crying out “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” Why did they say this?

The news had spread: Jesus had called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, after being there four days. Surely, this sign was evidence that Jesus was the Anointed One of God, the one King of Israel.

In our parishes, Palm Sunday would be a glorious celebration. Our churches would be decorated with palms so that we will remember the entry of our Lord and Savior into Jerusalem. Our churches would normally be filled and we would eagerly look forward to receiving our palm crosses and branches to return to our homes and place them on our icons.

Yet, this year we will not have that opportunity to celebrate this day together. However, this does not mean that we cannot experience and share the joy of this feast. We can place palm branches on the doors of our homes. We can recite and

repeat the words of the crowds, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” When we say this, we are doing more than remembering and celebrating an event from the past. We become the crowds of people greeting Christ as He enters into our homes, into our souls, into our lives.

Today, we are the crowds of people who have witnessed or felt the healing power of God. Today especially, as we see so many so suffer from the Coronavirus and hear the news of so many succumbing to it, we, must place our faith in the Lord, just as the crowds did centuries ago. We know that He has the power over life and death.

Palm Sunday also sets in motion Great and Holy Week. This evening, we will turn our attention away from the celebration of the crowds and towards the trials and the passion of Christ, events that will lead to His own death and His Glorious resurrection. These days are intense. They invite us to immerse ourselves in all the details of Christ’s last week with His disciples on earth.

For many years, I witnessed this immersion as I served with Archbishop Iakovos, who fell asleep in the Lord fifteen years ago, on April 10, 2005. His profound and deep faith and his powerful reflections on those days as we traveled from parish to parish are experiences I will never forget.

I say this because the place of our immersion in Holy Week is normally our parishes. This year, we will have to take the initiative to immerse ourselves in our homes. To do so, I urge you to follow the services on line, to read the services and meditate on their words carefully, from the readings of the scripture to the hymns themselves. It is still possible to immerse ourselves, through the power of our minds and hearts, and to place ourselves at the events of Christ’s final week upon this earth.

May Christ our God, who entered into Jerusalem on this day, bless you always.

Καλή Ανάσταση! Καλό Πάσχα!

Source