

# SYNAXARIA OF THE TRIODION

by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos

## PALM SUNDAY

On this day, the Sunday of Palms, we celebrate the radiant and glorious Feast of the Entry of our Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem.

### Verses

Sitting on a foal, He Who stretched out the Heaven  
By a word seeketh to loose mortals from irrationality.

### Synaxarion

After Lazarus had been raised from the dead, many, on beholding this event, came to believe in Christ. And indeed, a resolution was passed by the Jewish synagogue that Christ, and Lazarus himself, should be killed. Jesus, therefore, departed, letting evil run its course, and the Jews meditated how they might kill Him on the Feast of Passover. Some time after His flight, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, and there, after a supper had been made, Lazarus ate with Him; his sister Mary poured out ointment on Christ's feet. On the following day, He sent His Disciples to fetch the ass and the foal. He Who has Heaven for His throne entered Jerusalem, riding on the foal of an ass. The children of the Hebrews themselves spread their garments under Him and, cutting down palm branches, threw some of them in the way and carried others in their arms, and they cried out as they escorted Him: "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel."

This took place because the All-Holy Spirit moved their tongues to praise and laud Christ. Through the palms (the name given by the Hebrews to the tender branches) they signified Christ's victory over death. For it was customary for the victors of athletic contests and wars to be honored and borne about with branches of evergreen trees. The foal signified us, the people of the Gentiles, sitting and resting on whom Christ is proclaimed victor, conqueror, and King of all the earth.

About this Feast the Prophet Zacharias said: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; for behold, thy King is coming to thee, meek and riding on an ass and the foal of an ass." And again, about the children, David says: "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast Thou perfected praise." When

Christ entered the city, the whole of Jerusalem quaked and, goaded on by the High Priests to defend it, the crowds sought to do away with Him. He eluded them by hiding, and when He did appear, He spoke to them through parables.

By Thine ineffable compassion, O Christ our God, make us victors over irrational passions, and vouchsafe us to behold Thy clear victory over death, Thy radiant and life-bearing Resurrection, and have mercy on us. Amen.

