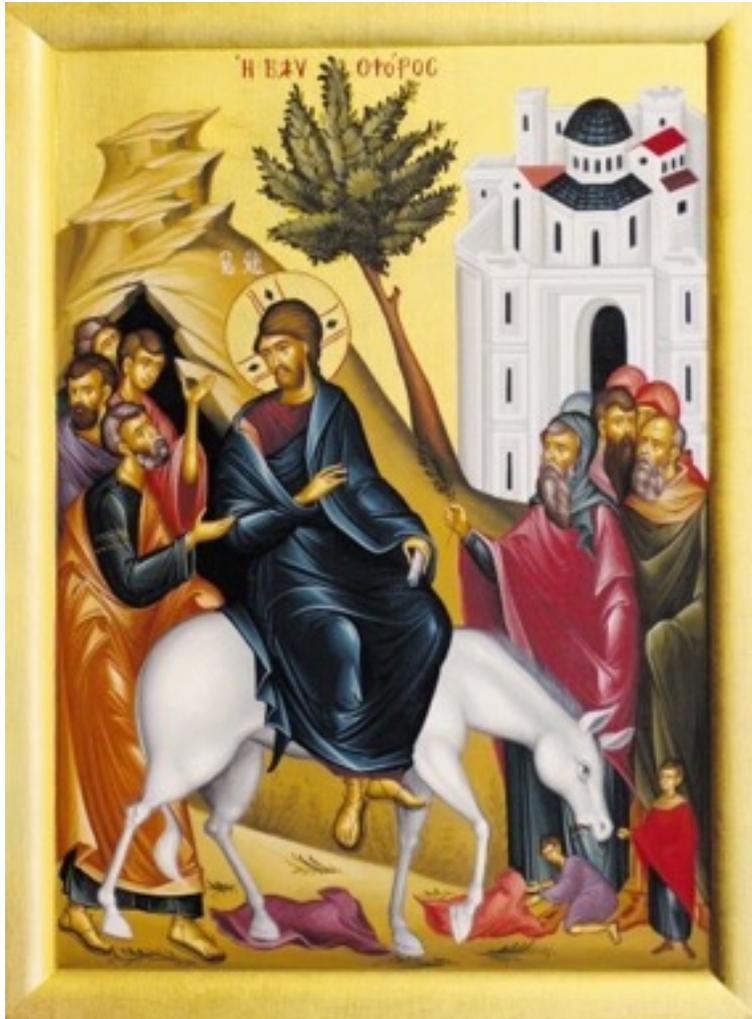


FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM: This Sunday we listen once again to the account of Jesus entering triumphantly down the Mount of Olives into Jerusalem. Indeed; what an irony. Yet I think the story and its message is much deeper.



We have journeyed through Lent; and we have learned to find our quiet place to discover ourselves and to share our life with God. Hopefully this practice won't end. In our discoveries we have come face to face with our angels and our demons. We have recognized our good: the divine in us, and we have recognized the weakness of our human nature. We have learned to love ourselves in order to be able to receive God's love, and we understand that once this love is received it is to be shared. We have also learned to forgive ourselves in order to experience God's forgiveness, and once experienced we come to understand the need forgive one another.

The entry of Jesus on Palm Sunday into Jerusalem as he embarks on his voluntary passion is another event in His life in which we can glean wisdom. The scenario isn't really different from any we have seen or experienced in our own day. How often have we witnessed someone being praised and built up only to be criticized and torn down? Jesus is hailed as King, and killed as a common criminal. His disciples and friends, all but a few run and hide. They are nowhere to be seen and he suffers abandoned and alone.

Understanding his human nature Jesus accepts what is. Sure He prays as we all do when pain and misfortune enter our lives, and he asks for God to take it from Him, but in the end he accepts what cannot be changed. In our lives these situations

arise, and we must accept that which we have no control over; knowing that it is part of our human existence.

Here's the difference: We can choose to unite these burdens with Christ and know that we will never be abandoned or alone throughout, or we can choose to deny what is, look for someone to blame and be so miserable as to drive not only our friends away, but become so embittered that we can no longer experience that love of God that we proclaim.

Yes, Passion Week at first seems to be a very sad story, and unless we are willing to go the distance and reach the end, we will never understand the joyful end. We will come to understand that our earthly "Passion" is not about suffering, but rather about sharing. We share every part of our lives with God, and He shares His with us, and together we witness to the world the power of love to overcome all things, even our pain and sorrow, even sickness and death. We are New Testament Christians; we believe that our lives are so closely knit with divinity that nothing can overpower our spirits unless we let it.

Let us pray:

Loving God, today we remember the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, and we are saddened by his betrayal. We can relate to his abandonment and loneliness, because in our own lives we have experienced the same; we have betrayed and been betrayed; but you God are faithful and steadfast, and your love is difficult if not impossible to comprehend. Let me be brave enough to remember your suffering and death this Holy Week that I might truly experience the power and the joy of your resurrection. Indeed by your cross and resurrection you have set us free. You are our Saviour and our friend. Amen