

His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop THOMAS



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Oakland, Charleston,
and the Mid-Atlantic

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), Holy Week, and Pascha - 2022

Beloved brother Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, God-fearing Monastics, and all my Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ our True God:

*“Hosanna to the Son of David!
‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’
Hosanna in the highest!”
Matthew 21:9*

As we join our voices with the throngs who lined the road into Jerusalem, crying out, “Hosanna in the highest!” let us not only worship with our mouths but also with our lives. For truly, the King comes riding on the foal of a donkey and in his extreme humility faces the disappointment of betrayal, the humiliation and shame of the cross, and the joy of the resurrection all for our salvation.

“Behold our King, meek and gentle, seated on the colt, draws near with haste to suffer and to cut off the passions; the Word upon an irrational beast wishing to deliver rational creatures; and it was possible to see on the back of a colt the One who rides on the shoulders of the Cherubim, Who once took up Elias in a fiery chariot, He who is rich by nature making Himself poor by design, and weak by intention, He who empowers all those who cry to Him, ‘Blessed are You Who come to call back Adam’.”

(St. Romanos the Melodist)

Christ our God, *“Since you bound Hell, slew Death and raised the world, with palms the infants praised You, O Christ, as victor, crying out to You today, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David.’”* How could we respond any more appropriately than by offering “ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God”?

“All-holy Son of God, number us together with those who sing Your praise, and receive the supplication of Your servants as once the children’s. Have mercy on those You fashioned, amongst whom You dwelt in love. Give peace to Your churches, shaken by enemies, and send down to me, O Saviour, release from my iniquities. Grant me to speak what You will, as You will, and do not let grief make my mind sluggish. Show me to be a skilled cultivator to cry, ‘Blessed are You Who come to call back Adam.’” (St. Romanos the Melodist)

May our journey with Christ through his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, his trial and crucifixion, and his glorious resurrection fill us with joy and gladness as our lives are made new in the never-ending day of His Kingdom!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bishop Thomas".

Rt. Rev. Bishop THOMAS (Joseph)

Auxiliary Bishop, Diocese of Oakland, Charleston, and the Mid-Atlantic

“The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11: 26)

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