

Rejoice, O Church

PALM SUNDAY [b]

March 25, 2018

ZECHARIAH 9:9-12

⁹ **Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.** ¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

Rejoice greatly, O Church, for you bear the Lord's Name from Baptism. You are the Lord's Zion. You are the city of God, where he has put his Name to dwell on Earth.

Zion was the city of David. It was Israel.

To David the promise was given that from his lineage would come the eternal King of Zion. David's greater Son, Jesus, established his eternal Throne on the cross, where he ransomed every sinner into his kingdom of life.

So now, after the cross, Zion is all those who belong to Jesus—those ransomed by his blood and joined to his cross in Baptism.

So rejoice, O Church, you are Zion, where Jesus reigns on Earth. You are the true Israel of God, all those bearing his Name.

Rejoice, O Church, for your King is he who rode into Jerusalem, bearing the sin of the world, to redeem the sinner on the cross.

He came righteous and having salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey. All so that he could come not in power, which would destroy the sinner, but in weakness, to bring gifts to the sinner.

He now comes to you, O Church, righteous and having salvation, humble, and not on the back of the donkey, but weak and lowly in the common elements of bread and wine.

But as it surprised Zion at that time that the eternal King would come by means of a lowly donkey, we may let it surprise us in our own generation, that the eternal King comes by means of bread and wine.

And just as Zion would find her king in no other way than by him being carried on a donkey, so the new Zion, the Church, will find no other King than he who comes by the bread and the wine, saying to all those who belong to him, ***This is my Body, This is my Blood.***

In this body and blood, he is righteous and is declaring us to be righteous.

He is bestowing salvation as he provides us with the body and blood that rode into Zion, that was then crucified on the cross, and that on the third day was raised up from the dead.

This he brings to us and gives to us in his Sacrament, so that the cross belongs to us as much as it does to him, and his resurrection is ours—for what else would it mean for the Living Lord to bring to us the resurrected body?

So rejoice, O Church, shout in triumph, O people of God.

Your king comes to you. You hear his Word in the Gospel, you bear his Name from Baptism, he continually comes to you in the humble and lowly gift of his Supper, continually declaring you righteous and bringing to you salvation—you are his people.

He humbled himself, even to the point of death on the cross, to atone for your sin.

Therefore, God his Father has highly exalted him, so that at the Name of Jesus, we may know, *This is our King*, and every knee may bow both in Heaven and on Earth, and all our voices may confess him, Jesus Christ, to be our Lord.

Rejoice, O Church, the people of Zion, the true Israel of God, for your King comes to you and makes you his own.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.