



CHRIST THE BRIDEGROOM

April 29



Did you know that Christ is called the Bridegroom but is not married?

In Sacred Scripture, Christ is described as “Bridegroom” though He is not married to a woman. Christ is “betrothed” to the Church, who is described as “bride, the wife of the Lamb” (Revelation 21:10). “This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5:32).

Christ the Bridegroom will not marry His Bride, the Church, until after the end of the age. This is why heaven is described as a “wedding banquet” (Matthew 22:2) and “the marriage of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:7). In the meantime, the Church is called to repent, mourn, fast, and prepare herself for Christ and the future wedding feast in heaven. “The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast” (Matthew 9:15).

The necessity for the Church to prepare herself for her wedding day (the Last Judgement) and to remain watchful for Christ the Bridegroom is described in the parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). The Bridegroom comes unexpectedly in the middle of the night. The five wise virgins that had enough oil for their lamps entered the wedding banquet, and the five foolish virgins that did not were left out (Matthew 25:10). This story is retold liturgically through the Bridegroom Matins service, which is celebrated during Holy Week.

On Palm Sunday evening (Holy Monday), the “Christ the Bridegroom” icon (Greek: Ο Νυμφίος) is placed in the center of the solea of the church until Holy Wednesday.

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