



## Orthodox Mission of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

306 W. Main Street  
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Emmitsburg, MD 21727

The Rev. Fr. Elias Yelovich, Pastor

<http://EntranceMission.org>

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### *We Were Created for Union with God* *From the Pastor's Desk in the Emmitsburg News-Journal* *Week of July 1, 2011*

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

*And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick...." (Luke 5:31)*

During the past several weeks I have had reason to think about these words of the Lord Jesus quite a bit. Two weeks ago I was going about my regular business, teaching and working in my day job and preaching and administering the Holy Mysteries in my congregation, when I suddenly took ill. I am a healthy man in my early 60s taking no regular medications, so the suddenness of my illness took me entirely by surprise. My doctor examined me and immediately admitted me into the hospital for treatment. Now, after some rest and great care to follow his instructions to the letter, I became better, once again working and serving in my little congregation on the west end of Main Street in Emmitsburg.

I have been to the doctor's office many times in my life for check-ups and examinations of one sort or another. Never once during any of those visits did I ever hear a truly sick person in the doctor's office lie about being sick or pretend to be well; never once did I observe a doctor assuming that the people

coming for help should not be there because of their illness. When we are ill, we eagerly go the doctor for treatment, because we cannot heal ourselves. There is little to be served by pretending that we are well when we are not.

How strange it is that we can be so very honest with our earthly physicians and so very dishonest with the Great Physician of our souls, Jesus Christ. If we come into His hospital, the Church at all, we come more often than not pretending to be well. We delude ourselves into thinking that we are basically Ok, but that others are not. We turn away from those who have fallen or who have attempted to solve their problems with a host of worldly solutions that do not work. Rather than helping them, we turn away from them. Rather than moving our lips and raising our hearts in prayer to God for them, we condemn and judge. How easily we forget that it was precisely for those who have been beaten up by the world that our Lord came – not for the righteous, but for the sinner; not for those who are well, but for those who are ill – for those very people from whom we so quickly turn away in prideful judgment, even as we ourselves pretend that we are Ok.

The truth is that none of us are well; the truth is that we are all sick, and there is no sin of which we are not guilty in our hearts. We live and interact with others in a world sickened by self-will, filled with violence and injustice, empty of mercy. Greed consumes us, and self-love drives us. Some of us even dare to imagine in our pride that God will simply overlook our sin and will somehow grant us a ticket to heaven without our repentance or without any attempt on our parts to submit to His will in our lives. We live for ourselves, forgetting that God created us to live for others. We act as if He were asleep or distant. We pay lip service to Him, but we do not submit our wills to His will. We overlook our own sin and pretend that the wages of sin, death, is really Ok, a “natural” part of life as I have heard many people mistakenly say; this above all else is the great lie of our modern age, the age in which so very many of us have turned away from Truth.

The more honest among us know that things are not Ok. God created us not for sin, or for death, or for violence, or for selfish gratification. God created us for union with Him, and it has always been His loving

**ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
*The Entrance of the Theotokos  
Into the Temple*



Sundays:  
Matins at 8:30 AM  
Divine Liturgy at 10 AM

Saturdays:  
Great Vespers at 7 PM

Eye of Feasts:  
Divine Liturgy at 7 PM

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will that we become ever more like Him in every way possible. Created in His image, He gave each of us the great and eternal vocation of growing ever more unto His likeness – ever more merciful, loving, patient, kind, gentle and forbearing. This He enables within us through the merciful gift of the Holy Spirit, Who calls us to repentance and unites us to our Lord in Whom we have Life Eternal. Sickened by sin, powerless to overcome that which holds us captive, unable to free or to heal ourselves, He provides us with the very Medicine of Immortality, the Life-giving and Precious Body and Blood of the Savior, Jesus Christ. In place of judgment and condemnation, He offers us healing, and He bids us to become means of healing of those around us. Only by helping others to get well can we ourselves get well.

There is so very much that I could write about the history and theology and dogma and life of the Holy Orthodox Church, a small congregation of which I pastor in downtown Emmitsburg at 306 West Main

Street. You may read of it if you like by means of a number of informative hyperlinks on our website: <http://EntranceMission.org>. And of course, you may visit us at the Divine Services, or call me at 717-817-1669 or email me at [FatherElias@EntranceMission.org](mailto:FatherElias@EntranceMission.org). I will answer any questions you have as best I can. But the one thing I want to leave with you in this brief introductory article about the Holy Orthodox Church and the ancient Tradition she preserves is that she is our hospital, the place and means of our healing. Inflicted as we are with the illness of self-will, the emptiness of sin, the Church is the only place wherein we *can* be healed. Only in Jesus Christ is there health; only in Him is salvation. The Holy Orthodox Church strives to maintain this ancient witness in her Divine Services, through her spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting, in her teaching and in her guidance to her members as they work out their salvation by means of repentance and growth in Grace, the self-giving of God to all who will receive Him.

It is truly impossible to summarize 2,000 years of Holy Orthodox Tradition in a few paragraphs. But by way of introduction to the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church, I offer you this simple description: we are a world-wide communion of Christians, representing hundreds of millions of people in many countries and cultures, linked to one another by means of a common faith and confessing the ancient and unaltered creed of the early Church. We attempt to follow the ancient Way, the Way of the Lord Jesus that calls us to repentance and that leads to the acquisition of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who draws us into an ever more perfect union with our Lord Jesus. The *Way*, as St. Luke calls it, is the narrow way that alone leads to our healing, to our salvation, the eternal progress of growth toward *Theosis* or union with the One True God, our Creator.

We are overjoyed to be among you in beautiful, historic Emmitsburg, and we pray that we will be a blessing to you and a means of healing for those among you who know your need for God. As many of you have welcomed us, so we welcome you, and we invite you to come and experience the Way of the ancient Church. As the Holy Apostle Philip said to the Holy Apostle Nathaniel, so we say as well: *Come and see!*

May the Peace of the Lord Jesus be with you!

**Remember what the LORD has done for you! Give Him thanks and praise! *Glory to His NAME for all things!*** Pray for me, His most unworthy of priests.

In Christ our true God,

+Fr. Elias

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