



Orthodox Mission of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

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You give them something to eat... Week of August 7, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

You give them something to eat....

The miracle of the feeding of the 5000 that we heard on Sunday in our Gospel lesson from Matthew 14 is the only one of the miracle stories aside from the Resurrection itself that each of the four Gospels records. Surely it was a miracle of such stunning impact that the early Christian community told it and re-told it over and over again. And clearly it represented for them the great miracle that our Lord continues to perform in each and every community of His people: a simple offering of a few loaves of pita and two fish is given, an offering that is completely insufficient for the needs of so many people. Our Lord takes the offering and magnifies it beyond all expectation, feeding over 5000 people with it. The Holy Fathers of course point to the Eucharist as the supreme example of this miracle. We bring the most basic of all foods – bread and wine – which people throughout the earth use to nourish their bodies each and every day. But He takes that offering and through the hands of His priests sanctifies it at every Divine Liturgy so that it becomes His own Precious Body and Blood – the food that nourishes not only our bodies, but our very souls unto Life Eternal.

But this great miracle is not only performed in the Divine Liturgy. It is part of the miracle of daily life itself in His Name. For whatever we bring Him – our time, our money, our efforts at any task offered to Him – He takes, insufficient though our offering is, and magnifies into something great that becomes a blessing sufficient for the salvation of many. He allows us to give whatever we have or whatever we can, even though our offering is but a drop in the ocean of human need; but He takes it and makes it sufficient, thereby allowing us to be participants in the process of healing and of leading others to salvation.

What is it, Brothers and Sisters, that you will offer? Our life in His Name is not merely about receiving. It is not sufficient for us to see to our own needs, to worry about our own salvation, to come and hear His Word and receive His good things at the Divine Liturgy for ourselves. Our Life in His Name is about much more than this. We are not disciples merely to gather on a Sunday morning to receive. We are disciples to participate with Him in the joy of saving others, in the honor of helping others, in the divine work of leading others to salvation. Look within and see what you can give, and bring it to Him as the boy in our Lord's miracle brought to Him a few loaves of bread and a couple of fish. Whatever you will give is of course insufficient. But He will take it and magnify it beyond all expectation. *You, Brothers and Sister, give them something to eat.*

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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