



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

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### *The Holy Myrrhbearing Women* Week of April 29, 2012

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

#### ***CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRISTUS VOZKRESE!***

*Mary Magalene; Mary and Martha the sisters of St. Lazarus; Joanna; Mary, the wife of Cleopas; Suzanna; Salome, the wife of Zebedee and step-daughter of the Theotokos; and Mary, the All-Holy Theotokos and the step-mother of James.*

The Gospels tell us that these eight women set out together to do what many others would have thought to be impossible: to break the seal posted by the Roman authorities and roll away the massive stone from the entrance of the tomb that held the sacred body of the Lord, the Savior Jesus Christ. Surely they might have reasoned out the impossibility of their task before setting out; but, they went nevertheless, motivated by their love for the Him. Whatever we do in love for Him Who loves us with a perfect love, whatever we do for Him is blessed a thousand-fold; and, it will never be done in vain. The seed of His Word sown by the sower, He promised, never returns empty. The act done in love for Him, passed on to others in His Name, will not be in vain. This above all else is what the Holy Myrrhbearing women show us. They went to anoint a corpse, as one of our hymns puts it, but instead they found the Lord alive - Life Himself, Life which is truly the Light of the World!

We are a small group at the Entrance Mission: a Traditional Orthodox community in the midst of a world overrun by conflict and confused by the mis-teachings of so many churches that have lost their way. When people look at us, brothers and sisters, what do they see? A community that loves the Lord, like those eight women did? Do they even see us at all? And if not, why not? For love is truly that one light that is placed on a stand so that it illumines the whole house. People will be drawn to Him, not by the accuracy or rightness of our arguments. They will be drawn to Him when they see our love for Him, a love that enables us to love one another also.

It is time for us to pick ourselves up after the bump in the road with the city of Emmitsburg. The decision of what we **may not** do has been made by the local government, which it has every right and power to do. But the decision and direction of what we still **may** do is yet to be determined by us. Where are those who are lonely? Or cast off? Or forgotten? Where are those whom the wealthy have pushed aside? Or whom the larger churches have ignored? Those are the ones we must seek: In the run-down nursing homes, the prisons, and on the streets if necessary. It is there that we must go – not out of mere duty, or mere obedience. No, we must go like the Myrrhbearing Women went – driven by our love for Him, for He always sought out the cast-offs, the wretched, the forgotten, the judged and the condemned. It's time for us to do that as well, and to thank the Lord for saying "No" to the easier ways that have been denied us by the local town authorities.

We will now turn to those possibilities, Brothers and Sisters. Each of us must look and find where we are needed. And it is there that we must go. Time to get up and move ahead! **Lent is over; Pascha, the time of Life is here.**

***CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN***

**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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