



Orthodox Mission of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

306 W. Main Street
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

The Rev. Fr. Elias Yelovich, Pastor

<http://EntranceMission.org>

All Saints Week of June 7, 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:6)

The story has been told about a man who passed by a large church, delighted to hear the sounds of beautiful chanting and antiphonal singing that came out into the street through the open doors and windows. When the priest of the parish came out of one of the doors of the church the man asked him what great event in the Church Calendar was being celebrated to account for so many people in church that day. The priest answered him with a puzzled look and said, "Why there is no feast today; I was praying Matins in the church by myself." The man replied that he had heard the sound of a great multitude within the church. The priest paused for a moment, then shook his head with a smile: "Ah, you heard the congregation of angels and saints who sang with me!"

Truly it is the case that there are innumerable saints from every era of the Christian faith who have struggled in peace and repentance to grow ever closer to the likeness of the One Who placed His divine image within each of us. Sometimes on a Sunday when I commemorate the saints of the day I am amazed at how many there are from so many different cultures, eras and lands. But I also wonder how

many more there are that have not been recognized and “glorified” by the Church in public affirmation of their sanctity. Many, many myriads of them to be sure!

God does not call us to be recognized or publicly known by others! He calls us to be faithful unto death, even as our Lord Jesus Christ was faithful. He calls us to submit in humility to the life which has been so clearly laid before each of us by means of the example of our Lord Himself: to serve, to bless, to pray for our enemies, to seek the good of the other at all times; to accept the unacceptable; to be men and women who give of ourselves for one another, even as He gave Himself for us. So many have done so, so many whom we do not know; but, as our Lord teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount, they are known to the Father in Heaven. When we pray, we do so in secret; and our Father who sees in secret with hear and answer our prayer.

This Sunday the Holy Fathers have designated a day of commemoration for all the saints of all times and places who have fought the good fight and stood without shame for the Lord. We do not know most of them by name. But God knows. And we pray in thanksgiving to Him for their lives, the lives that have gone before us in faith and that create the foundation upon which we all build the house of faith ourselves through the Self-giving of the All-holy Spirit.

So Brothers and Sisters, let each of us do as the Holy Apostle tells us to do in the memorable lesson we will hear together on Sunday, and let us honor all the saints of God with lives that seek to become ever more like the One Who inspired them and Who stands with the same grace and power in our midst:

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

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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