



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>

God FOR us Week of January 17, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is born! Glorify Him!

Within the span of one short week, we transition from one major feast to another. The celebration of the birth of our Savior on Christmas soon gives way to the more ancient celebration of His appearance, His manifestation, or as we say in the ancient designation, Epiphany. Christmas is our celebration of the Incarnation: God enters into our flesh and our blood and becomes God *with us, Emmanuel*. Epiphany (which we Orthodox also refer to as Theophany) is our celebration of His cleansing of the fallen world: God, Who is “with us” is now clearly understood to be *God for us, our Savior*. The All-Pure one enters the waters of the Jordan, filled with the filth of the pollution of the sin of the world, and He purifies it. He makes clean the water which we will use in the second birth of our own purification; the water of sin becomes the water of Life, “Holy Water.” We will use this water for sanctification of our homes and bodies, in times of blessing and times of illness.

The ancients celebrated this ancient feast of Epiphany long before they began the practice of celebrating Christmas. Both feasts are wondrous! Epiphany is that 12th day of Christmas that we sing about in the popular carol, the time of great rejoicing, for the One born of the Virgin in Bethlehem, the One Who enters into our life, our world and become one with us, now reveals the reason: He came to save, to make clean that which we have besmirched with our sin; He comes *for us*, to be our Savior.

This Sunday is our preparation for the feast, the Sunday before the Epiphany; on the paramon (eve) of the Feast (Monday, January 18) we will follow the same schedule of divine services which we followed for Christmas: **Vespertal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil at 9 AM; Matins beginning after sundown around 5 PM will be followed by the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom around 6 PM. The Great Blessing of the Waters will be done following the morning liturgy.**

God willing, I will see each of you at one or both of the Divine Liturgies for the Feast!

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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