



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

306 W. Main Street  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

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***Bear One Another's Burdens!***  
**Week of February 23, 2020**

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**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

**Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!**

Do not be vexed with those who show pride or malice, effeminacy and impatience in their relationships with you or others, but remember that you yourself are subject to the same and greater sins and passions. Pray for them and be meek with them. "If a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness... Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:1-2).

There is in fact no greater way to summarize the teaching of this Sunday's Gospel lesson than this, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

"It is the love of Christ which constrains us," St. Paul said in another passage (2 Corinthians 5:14). We hear the essence of this teaching from our Lord Himself this Sunday in the Parable of the Last Judgment, the last of the parables recorded by Matthew before our Lord's Passion, and the parable appointed by our holy fathers to hear on Meatfare Sunday. The essence of the judgment is whether or not we have shown charity to those in need, visited and prayed for the

sick, brought comfort to those in prison, to the dying, to the comfortless – in essence, becoming Christ to our neighbor in need. Who is our neighbor, the lawyer asked the Lord? In His Parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus answered: Our neighbor is anyone in need; anyone who is weak, pushed aside, estranged from the rest of humanity, anyone victimized. The essential question is not, “Who is our neighbor?” Rather, it is: “To whom can I be neighbor?” We do not look at the “worthiness” of those whom we serve; we serve as Christ serves us, with unconditional love for all, for none of us are worthy of His love, and yet He gives it nevertheless.

Great Lent is not about food, Brothers and Sisters! It is about turning from our perpetual self-service to a clear and real intention to serve others. How do we do that? We make others the subject of our extra prayers during Lent; we deny ourselves so that we can give to others instead (energy, time, money); we open the strings of our purses and wallets and give for the sake of those in need. These three pillars of the Great Fast: fasting, prayer and almsgiving, you see, are not about the achievement of some sort of righteousness for ourselves, but rather about the care of others. Who could dare to claim righteousness if they were only serving themselves? Who could even contemplate salvation apart from love of God and neighbor in need?

Remember the words of St. John of Kronstadt, and put them into practice this upcoming holy season: “Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ!”

Let us begin by gathering together this Saturday morning on **Soul Saturday at 10 AM** to pray for forgiveness, life and salvation for our beloved dead in the Lord. ***PLEASE EMAIL ME YOUR LIST OF NAMES BEFORE SATURDAY MORNING!***

In Christ our true God,

Fr. Elias

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