



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

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### *The Ubiquity of God and His Miracles* August 11, 2024

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

#### **Brothers and Sisters in Christ:**

Do you remember the story of the priest who was caught in a flood? First a rope was thrown to him. But rather than catching it to free himself, he said he would wait on God's direct help. A while later, the fire rescue sent a boat to him. It passed within reach of him, but instead of taking advantage of it, he clung onto the roof of his car and waited for God to deliver him. Then, a helicopter flew down with a folding ladder dangling from it, but instead of grabbing it, the pious priest continued to pray, "Lord help me!" Finally, the storm became so fierce that the wind and the rain and the flood waters swept him away to his death. Standing with his guardian angel before the throne of God, the priest asked his angel angrily: Why did you not help me? The angel replied: The Lord directed me to bring you a rope, but you would not take hold of it! Then He directed me to send you a motorboat rescue, but you would not get in; and finally, He told me to send you a helicopter, but you would not use it either!

Even when the Lord Himself, God incarnate, healed the blind man and freed the mute man possessed by a demon – even when it was clear that Jesus did so openly with compassion and

care for those who were sick and suffering, - there were still those who denied His power to do so as God incarnate. It must have been some sort of “black magic” they said. They could not conceive of someone other than themselves have such authority to act and to speak as God’s own representative on earth.

In my experience, I must say that most people stand in the camp of the Pharisees. God’s miracles are all around us. People take them all for granted. They do not realize that every breathe is a gift from God, every wonder of nature is a sign of His presence and love, and that every time we get better from illness, even a small illness like a cold or simple ache, it is God Who has healed us. The doctors, scientists, lab workers, nurses, pharmacists are all agents of healing to be sure, but it is God Himself Who heals. The miracle of giving sight to the blind man and releasing the mute man from his affliction pale in comparison to the millions, billions of miracles God enacts every day of our lives – not because we are in some sense worthy through our great faith, or our high moral standards, but simply because He is compassionate, as we say repeatedly in the Liturgy, “because He is merciful and loves mankind.”

I have seen many people healed of many illnesses and diseases in my priesthood – people given renewed life and hope after a stay in the hospital or after taking this or that new medication or saved from the ravages of terrible diseases like polio, covid, RSV, pneumonia – because of vaccines that prevent them. This I have witnessed countless times. But the times that people have risen up in praise and glorification of the One Who actually healed them, God Almighty, are far less.

Brothers and sisters: Remember that God’s miracles and care for you are not exceptional, but constant. And the only appropriate response for each of us is to give Him thanks and praise – for truly all health and well-being, all healing, comes from Him!

To Jesus Christ be all honor and glory forever! Amen!

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