



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

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## *The Birth of the Prince of Peace* January 7, 2021

**Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

**Christ is born! Glorify Him!**

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end. (Isaiah 6:6-7)*

Last evening a handful of the faithful at Entrance Mission gathered at church to celebrate the birth of the One Whom the prophet Isaiah proleptically announced to be the Prince of Peace. Even as we were reading this prophecy in the enclosed calm of our little church during the Vespers of the Nativity the mobs were storming our capitol building and perpetrating the violence that drove their actions, egged on by those who place their faith in the idols of self-interest, resentment and hatred. It occurred to me even as I was reading this prophecy that the circumstances of the birth of the Prince of Peace were no different. The Savior, God Incarnate, the Prince of Peace, He Who came only to save and to redeem our souls, was born during a time of violence, displacement of multitudes and unkindness. There was no room for him in the

inn, the Gospel of Luke records; so “she gave birth to her first-born son and laid Him in a manger,” a feeding trough for the animals housed in a nearby cave.

Nothing has changed in our world since the time of that blessed birth. Nations continue to push against each other; governments come and go. People are displaced, treated with violence and suffer the indignities perpetrated by the prejudices, the hatreds and the resentments of many. The Prince of Peace, however, continues to be born – on the altars of His Church and through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those Who will open their hearts to be the mangers in which He may be laid again and again. Remember that in the Church of Jesus Christ from the very beginning it has always been understood that it is He in Whom our faith must be placed, not in the people, not in the leaders of this or that government, not in the expectation for things to be improved in the halls of those who govern. Only in Him is there hope; only in Him is there security; it is only in Him that we should trust, certain in the knowledge that no one who trusts in Him will ever trust in vain. The Saints and the Martyrs all understood that there would never be peace in this world or in this or any other land until we, the people of this world, place our faith in Him, the Prince of Peace.

It is the case, Brothers and Sisters, that every one of us take this message for granted. We come to church, or not, trusting in our precious view of this or that aspect of our personal viewpoint, our precious self interest. Understand this: The One born in the manger in the cave of Bethlehem so long ago waits to be reborn in your heart. He waits to be the Prince of Peace for you. He waits for you to trust only in Him, not in the empty promises of this or that political party or system. As you see the violence erupting in the corridors of power in our capitol, turn away from that image and place the eyes of your hearts on the One Who is the only Prince of Peace, the One Who is truly Emanuel, God with you! He alone is worthy of your most ardent heart’s desire!

***Christ is born! Glorify Him!***

Fr. Elias

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