



**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>

Worship in Spirit and Truth
May 30, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. (John 4:24)

The Sunday of the Samaritan woman marks the beginning of the second half of our Paschal season. In a little over a week we will come together to celebrate the Ascension of our Lord, the time of His heavenly glorification when He takes the throne of authority in Heaven at the right hand of the Father. Soon thereafter the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies on the Day of Pentecost follows, when the Spirit is poured out upon the Disciples openly. The time of the temple as a building marking the place and presence of God is over; now, the Holy Spirit dwells within the hearts of all believers. As St. Paul wrote, our bodies, not some external physical structure, are now temples of the Holy Spirit in which God dwells. The Spirit waits to draw us into an ever more perfect union with God so that we begin that eternal journey toward the fulfillment of our true potential, to become ever more and more “like” Him.

The dialogue that Jesus has with the Samaritan woman is a reminder to the newly baptized Christians who became members of the Body of Christ at Pascha that now we do not glorify God by means of our external rules and sacrifices. We glorify Him by submission to the authority of His presence within us. We worship Him, not by means of sacrifices of blood; we worship Him, as He

said to the Samaritan women, “in spirit and in truth.” Proper worship and honor and respect of God is by means of a heart that accommodates itself to the reception of the Holy Spirit, the acquisition of Whom, St. Seraphim of Sarov taught, is indeed the goal of our entire life. Only in the Body of Christ, the Church, by means of the proclamation of the Word and the reception of the Holy Mysteries can we become that for which we were created, to be One with the Father.

To follow Christ we must put aside our precious externals and our treasured preconceptions. Instead, we must seek to become more and more “like” Him. A heart that is open to the reception of the Spirit within seeks above all else to accommodate itself to Him and His Will and to become more and more “like” Him. Acceptance of the forgiveness and love of the Master is the only way we can come to love Him and to forgive and love others in turn. This is what it means to worship Him in spirit and in truth.

No one comes away from an encounter with Jesus Christ unchanged. His truth is piercing; His love all encompassing; His self-giving without limit. Each of us is called to open our hearts so that we, like the Samaritan woman, can receive the Spirit and live the truth that He, and He alone, is our True God, the One in Whom we never trust in vain, the One Who alone grants Life and Eternal Salvation. This is what our Gospel lesson for Sunday reminds us of.

As the Lord said, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Fr. Elias

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