



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

**306 W. Main Street
Emmitsburg, MD 21727**

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<http://EntranceMission.org>

Faith, Humility, and Intercession for Others
July 10, 2022

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

O Lord, I know that I am not worthy that You should come under my roof, in the house of my soul, for it is entirely desolate and fallen in ruin, and You will not find in me a place worthy to lay Your head. But as You desire to abide with me, I have come to You, trusting in You alone.

I prayed this prayer on Thursday morning at a local Nursing Home when I went to take Holy Communion to one of the residents there who belongs to our little congregation as she prepares to enter the hospital. This is a prayer I have always loved ever since I heard it years ago before I even became Orthodox. It expresses perfectly, I think, the proper attitude we should have when we come before the Lord in prayer and supplication – faith and humility, humility in the sense of our deep and true awareness that we are entirely unworthy to enter into Communion with the One Who bids us to come, nevertheless.

On Sunday we will hear the miracle story from the 8th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel that epitomizes these truths, indeed, that is the very source of the prayer above. Almost immediately after He comes down from the Mount, St. Matthew records that a Centurion approaches Jesus and asks for the healing of His servant. Jesus immediately agrees to go with the Centurion to his home, saying, *"I will come and heal him!"* But instead of immediately jumping at the Lord's offer, the Centurion answers Him, *"Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed."*

For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." St. Matthew says that when Jesus heard these words, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. "

St. Gregory the Theologian pointed out on one of his orations that the Centurion is the very example of the way in which we all should come before God in prayer and supplication, First, the Centurion came before Jesus in faith. This does not mean that he had some sort of extraordinarily correct belief that was in some way superior or stronger than others around him. Faith is simple trust, a willingness to accept and receive what the Lord gives in gratitude, a desire to know Him and to be one with Him. Second, the Centurion came to Him in humility. How remarkable this is! When Jesus said that He would come immediately and heal the Centurion's servant, the Centurion responded in humility, *"No, Lord; it is not necessary for you to come; say the Word, and my servant will be healed!"* This above all qualities is what each and every one of us must strive to obtain – a humility like that of the Centurion. Humility is to see the truth of who we are in relation to others and particularly in relation to God. We are nothing; but He, He is everything. Everything we have, our very *being* - every good and kind and loving action we do, comes from Him. This, the Centurion understood, and thus could say in faith and in humility, *"Say the Word, and my servant will be healed!"* Thirdly, however, the quality we perhaps forget most often is that quality that leads us to look for the well-being others. The Centurion was not asking for his own benefit, but for the benefit of another, his servant. This third quality of our prayer life before God should never be forgotten or minimized! Faith, humility, and intercession for others. These, Brothers and Sisters are the qualities we need to remember from this story, and these are the qualities we need to practice in our own prayer life before God.

The Lord God has made us all and is ever patient, long-suffering and loving to each of us. He does not force us to do His Will, and neither does He owe us anything. He waits for us to come before Him like the Centurion came before Him so long ago. Like the Centurion, may each of us approach Him in faith – a simple trust in Him and in His Will to be one with us and to lead us on the eternal path of salvation. May each of us approach Him in humility, aware that He is God, the One who made us and Who alone can heal and guide and save us from the Last Enemy, unworthy though we are. And may each of us approach Him in intercession for those in need around us. Of course, we must and will pray for ourselves and for those we love; but Brothers and Sisters! There are so very many who suffer in this world, near and far from us, who need our prayers. Let us pray for them – especially for those who have failed and fallen. Let us pray for them in true love and for their salvation. May the words of the Centurion truly be engraved upon our hearts:

O Lord, I know that I am not worthy that You should come under my roof, in the house of my soul, for it is entirely desolate and fallen in ruin, and You will not find in me a place worthy to lay Your head. But as You desire to abide with me, I have come to You, trusting in You alone.

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