



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

306 W. Main Street Emmitsburg,
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<http://EntranceMission.org>

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Exemplars of the Faith
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Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

In the gospels, the people that are attracted to Christ and healed by Him tend to be the simple, sick, and sinful. In other words, these are people who can by no means save themselves. Their need to rely on God is highlighted in the scriptures, and it's their reliance on God that makes them stand out as exemplary characters in the scriptures. It's an entire inversion of how we think exemplars of any faith should be. They aren't the strong, the mighty, or the intelligent, but rather the opposite.

In today's gospel reading, the man that Christ chose to heal couldn't be any lowlier. He was a man that was born blind. The Jews of that time would have thought he belonged to a family of sinners, or that he himself sinned before he was in the womb. He would have been looked down upon. Today, we have organizations that assist the blind in obtaining jobs, and we have seeing eye dogs that help the blind get around. In the days of Christ, they didn't have this. He was useless, a beggar, and viewed by those around him as being among the sinful. And yet, he is the one that follows Christ's instruction

and who Christ chooses to heal. He is the exemplary character that the entire Church hears about on this Sixth Sunday of Pascha, the Sunday of the Blind Man.

When Christ saw the blind man, he made clay with his saliva, anointed the eyes of the blind man with this clay, and told him to wash in the pool of Siloam. This man followed the instructions of Christ, and after he washed in the pool, he miraculously received his sight. The blind man had no reason to follow Christ's instructions. As he stated later in the Gospel, since the world began, no one has ever heard of a man who opened the eyes of the blind. He could have scoffed at Christ's command to wash in the pool and continued begging. But no, he put his reliance, his faith, in Christ, and Christ healed him.

In our lives, we put too much of our reliance on the world. We rely on our jobs to provide us with a salary to live on. We rely on the bank to save our money. We rely on TVs and computers to entertain us. We rely on family relations to support us. The problem is that all these things pass away. People lose their jobs, banks file for bankruptcy, TVs break, family members die. Nothing worldly that we rely on is entirely reliable.

The only thing reliable in life is God. Whether we are rich or poor, employed or unemployed, healthy or sick, God is the source of every good thing. If we have a job that supports us financially, we should pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God for that job. If we lose our job, we should pray to God for help. If we are healthy, we should thank God in our prayers for our health. If we are sick, we should pray to God for healing. Everything in our lives will pass away, but God will always be there.

There are other lessons we can take from today's gospel. I've only touched on the first handful of verses. But I think it is an important lesson to proclaim. The eye of our soul is blind without God, whether we are living comfortably in the world or not. Let us put our faith and reliance in God as the blind man did, and He will enlighten our souls with His own presence, uniting us to Him in such an intimate way that makes everything else in life pale in comparison.

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