



## Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

306 W. Main Street Emmitsburg,  
MD 21727

<http://EntranceMission.org>

717-817-0084

The V. Rev. Elias Yelovich,  
Rector

The Rev. Anthony Duvall,  
Assistant

---

The Centurion  
July 6, 2025

---

### Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

- Last week, I spoke to you about the quality of gratitude. Remember: we heard the lesson from Romans 5 in which St. Paul spoke of the central affirmation of the Gospel: That because of what the Lord has given and done for us, we are certain of our eventual salvation. Justified by Grace, we may have peace.
- We also heard a central teaching of our Lord from the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord's contrast between what we might have heard regarding the content of the Law, and the expectation, the goal, of our adherence to it: Not only do we not kill, we do not allow ourselves to be angry with our brother, our sister; not only do we no seek vengeance against those who wrong us; but, we allow ourselves to be mistreated; we turn the other cheek in response to being struck.
- I said that such behavior can only come as the fruit of our gratitude to the Lord. I said that our first and most important response to the Gospel is gratitude. That if we do not have gratitude, then we have not received, we have not understood, we have not apprehended the truth of our salvation.
- Our justification by His Grace, His mercy, His love for us has only one appropriate response on our parts: Gratitude. I reminded you that we are the people of gratitude. Our very worship is centered on the act of gratitude called Eucharist, and the very beginning of our Prayer that we call the Anaphora begins with the priest turning to the people present and saying those most memorable of all word: LET US GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD OUR GOD!
- Today, we go one step further in the hearing of our Gospel Lesson from Matthew.
- We see evidence in the story about the Centurion of the very rarest of virtues: HUMILITY
- True humility is a quality that cannot be contrived. It is always the result of understanding who you are in relationship to others, and not posturing as if you were better or more deserving or more qualified.
- None of us are taught to be humble. On the contrary, we are told by our bosses, our supervisors, our hierarchs even to put our best foot forward and tout our positive achievements

- This is the way you will be a promotion, a raise; this is the way you will draw others to your church, your congregation
  - We are such and such; we offer such and such; I am worth your
- The Gospel Lesson tells the story of a Centurion who is humble. This, I may observe, is the rarest of rare qualities once could possibly expect from a Centurion.
- A Centurion by his very title was a Gentile of the Roman army in charge of a hundred men. One does not get to that position by showing humility. One must fight and prove oneself above others who would want the same status
- Nevertheless, this Gentile, this Centurion, comes to Jesus with a great need, and rather than asserting any thought that he might deserve such a favor from the Lord, he demonstrates the rare quality of humility, awareness that he does not deserve anything from the Lord, even to the point of not expecting the Lord to enter his house.
- Such faith, such humility, the Lord acknowledges as so rare that He has not found it in all of the people of Israel.
- Sometimes we are brought to seek help or to intercede for the welfare of others because of their or our great need, like the Centurion.
- But when we do, let us remember who we are before God: We are sinners in need of forgiveness; God owes us nothing on the basis of our achievements or actions; none of us are righteous.
- Nevertheless, it is His good Will to save us! We are justified by Grace, and may have peace in light of His will to save us. As such, we become not only the people of gratitude, the community of Eucharist, but we embody the rarest of all virtues, humility, in our relationship with Him.
- God has chosen to save us: Most assuredly NOT because of anything we are or do or have done or ever will do! He saves us, He justifies us, by Grace, by His good will to save.
- As the people of gratitude, let us remember who and what we are in light of this great gift. Whatever needs we bring before Him, for ourselves or for others, let us do so as humble and grateful servants of the Lord of salvation! For it is His good will to save, not to condemn!

Fr. Elias

Orthodox Church of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple

306 West Main Street

Emmitsburg, MD 21727

<https://EntranceMission.org>