

wealth, so that many emperors did not hold wars, but they were buying off the barbarians so that they would not make invasions. And we today, having cut off so many other ones, conscientiously offend even the Sunday holiday....

In his age, Saint Kosmas the Aitolian, acting completely anti-productively according to today's factors, emphatically preached the abolition of the Sunday bazaars and their transfer to another day, so that Sunday could be a day dedicated to sanctification, to the family and to rest. Wherever they listened to him, not only did they progress in all the areas of the daily life, but the phenomenon of Islamizations was also wiped out. Today fortified behind economic arguments, statistics and numbers, many are pressuring for the imposition of a model with the only imperative being the achieving of economic aims. It dehumanizes man, since it exhausts him between unacceptable work terms and the spectrum of unemployment.

Our age claims, according to the economic orders, the adoption of practices which, according to the viewpoint of the Church, comprise a sin. And sin chases away the blessing of God. And without this, unrelated to efforts, everything is condemned to failure. Our struggle as Christians, lies in us drawing the divine blessing with the way of our life, so that everything occurs according to God; for the problems to be surpassed, and for the comfort of a calm conscience to exist.

Archimandrite I. N

**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2016, 1ST SUNDAY OF LUKE**, *Euphrosyne of Alexandria, Paphnoutios the Martyr & his 546 Companions in Egypt, Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos of Evangelistria, Mochos, Our Righteous Father Sergius of Radonezh, Finbar the Confessor, First Bishop of Cork*

**TONE OF THE WEEK** *Plagal of the First Tone*

**EOTHINON** : *Third Eothinon*

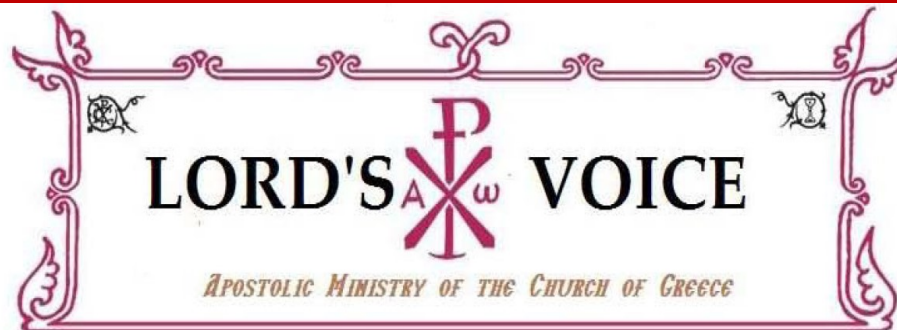
**EPISTLE**: *St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 1:21-24; 2:1-4*

**GOSPEL**: *Luke 5:1-11*

**NEXT SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2016, 2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF LUKE**, *The Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian and the Virgin Martyr Justina, Theophilus the Confessor*

**EPISTLE**: *St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 4:6-15*

**GOSPEL**: *Luke 6:31-36*



64<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

PAMPHLET # 39 (3304)

## THE BLESSING OF GOD AND ECONOMY

The notion is imposed and indisputable that today, economy, as a strong element of our daily life, is a field of the absolute domination of cold logic. It is characterized by a brutal rationalism, and is imbued by the sourness of advantageous calculation. So for this reason, it cannot be combined with emotionalisms, to be related to values and ideals, or get mixed up with meanings such as "altruism", "self sacrifice", "solidarity". In one word, in economic thought, elements of spirituality, transcendental viewing, or metaphysical acceptance, do not fit. So for this reason also, for this notion of economy, the word of the Lord was heard heavy "you are not able to serve God and mammon". (Lk. 16:13).

And nevertheless, Christians are "condemned" to live in this world, to face the economic problem, and to contribute to the economy of their country. They are obligated to align themselves or to adopt to the prevailing work conditions, in order to respond to their needs and obligations. They develop themselves in the given financial atmosphere of each historic happenstance, insisting on claiming the "on earth as it is in heaven". In the end, how much does the incongruity which our Christ puts forth apply, and to what degree is this compatible with the reality?

### Inconceivable fishing

Peter tired, together with his brother Andrew, were sewing their nets on the shore of Lake Genessaret. The previous night, aside from being exhausting, was simultaneously also disappointing. Despite the

**1ST SUNDAY OF LUKE**  
**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE 5:1-11**

At that time, Jesus was standing by the lake of Gennesaret. And he saw two boats by the lake; but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he was astonished, and all who were with him, at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; henceforth you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

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toilsome effort, the experienced fishermen did not catch anything. And whereas the tiredness and grief was obvious, the Teacher, familiar to them from John the Forerunner, comes and asks them for a favor. There were so many people who were following Him, that the only manner for Him to manage to speak to them, was for them all to sit in the amphitheatrical slope of the hill, which concluded in the lake, and He from some boat to address words to them at a small distance from the shore. And of all the boats, the Teacher selected that of Peter.

Without objection, despite all his tiredness and distress, Peter goes out into the open a bit and serves our Christ. And when He finishes, Peter, already without sleep at night for many hours, hears the Teacher giving him an unexpected commandment at noon day: "go out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch". Where was business fishing ever heard of right in the middle of the day? At the moment furthermore, when on the previous night, it was proven so fruitless and

the gathering of the nets had just finished, so that they would be ready for the new nighttime endeavor?

And nevertheless Peter, even though exhausted, even though frustrated, even though an experienced fisherman, obeyed the Teacher with much respect, expressing only a small reservation about the result of this action. And there it is where Peter is proven false panegyrically. His nets, which previously, the rocks and the sticks of the depth of the lake had ripped, now the excessive weight of fish is ripping them, which beyond every expectation had been entrapped in them. Beyond and above every logical principle of fishing skill, of economic science, of natural terms, what, in no way was expected, happens. Why? On account of the blessing. The only thing that was added to whatever with unreserved professionalism and full effectiveness, Peter did all night long, was the blessing of the Lord. And with this he proceeded to what was unheard of.

### **The blessing of God**

Many times people with absolute scientificness and impeccable logic, drew up plans, prepared programs, attempted the materializing of great visions. And very many times, they unexpectedly failed, to a degree that the proverbial saying arose "God sees the programs of men and laughs". At other times again, despite every expectation, they succeeded without all the previous things, with faith in God as the only supply. So for this reason also, people in older times, with whatever they occupied themselves with, used to say and that they meant it: "God first". So for this reason also, to this day, it is a blessed habit, whatever we attempt to do, that we start it out with a holy water blessing, with the blessing of the priest, with conscientious prayer.

In the history of the race of the Hellenes, there are many moments, which like the wondrous fishing of Peter, give meaning to the abolition of the principles of economic science and, with putting philanthropy forth, they make combined successes both in the spiritual and in the economic level. The fact is characteristic that in the economic and spiritual zenith of the Byzantine Empire, there were officially legislated about 160 days of ecclesiastical holidays. The work days were about 200, and nevertheless the treasuries of the state overflowed from