

French students wrote something like that in a slogan of theirs, when they rose up in May of 1968: “we reject the world, where the certainty that we will not die from hunger, is exchanged with boredom and a lack of meaning of life”. Much later on, our own anarchists rewrote it in five words [6 in English]: “empty lives, full in credit cards!”

In the end, the wonderful satiation of the –at least-5000 - does not aim to offer magical solutions to social problems. Such a misunderstanding of the miracle occurred very quickly, and Christ denounced it with much bitterness. When after a little while, they were seeking Him “beyond the sea”, He received them with an awakening “cold shower”: “you are searching to find me, not because you saw miracles – which convinced you that I am the Messiah -, but in order to eat from the breads and to be satiated. Work not for the food which perishes but for the food, which remains incorrupt and imparts eternal life to you”. Without this “lasting food” the lives of people will be empty without meaning, even if the credit cards are full.

Archim. B.

**SUNDAY, JULY 22, 2018** EIGHTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW *Mary Magdalene, the Holy Myrrh-bearer and Equal to the Apostles, Markella, the Virgin-martyr of Chios*

**TONE OF THE WEEK :** *Plagal of the Third Tone*

**EOTHINON :** *Eighth Orthros Gospel*

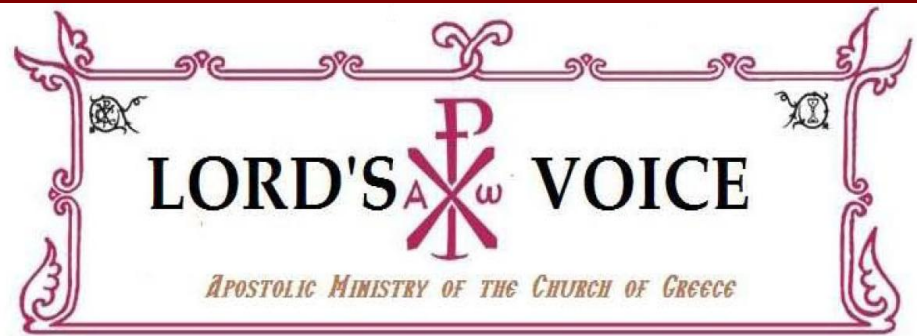
**EPISTLE READING:** *I Corinthians 1:10-17*

**GOSPEL READING:** *Matthew 14:14-22*

**NEXT SUNDAY, JULY 29, 2018** NINTH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW , *The Holy Martyr Callinicus , Theodota the Martyr and her Children, Holy Virgin Martyr Theodota , Pious King Theodosius the New, Seraphima the Virgin-martyr of Antioch , Constantine III, Patriarch of Constantinople, Olaf of Norway*

**EPISTLE READING:** *I Corinthians 3:9-17*

**GOSPEL READING:** *Matthew 14:22-34*



**66<sup>TH</sup> YEAR JULY 22, 2018 PAMPHLET #29 (3399)**

## CHRIST, THE TRUE FOOD

Obviously the impressive number of people, who went to meet Christ, did not go with the expectation of a free meal. They went to satiate another hunger of theirs: their hunger for the sweetest teaching of His “above honey and wax”. And Christ, seeing their fervent longing, took compassion on them. And first He healed their sick, without seeking another indication or confession of faith. I wonder, what greater witness of faith was needed - asks Saint John Chrysostom – then that they sought Him, leaving their homes and their villages, they walked such a long road in order to find Him, making a circle around the lake, and they waited so many hours near Him, hungry, being indifferent about the hunger which had begun pressuring them?”

## Don't cross your hands!

When evening finally approached, the disciples showed their own compassion also toward the multitude, urging Christ to allow them to go for food. And amazed, they heard Christ telling them: “they don't have to go anywhere. You give them to eat!” In other words, Christ tells both them and us: “even in the most unsurpassable problem, don't rush to cross your hands and to wait

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 14:14-22

At that time, Jesus saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds.."

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for solutions descending from heaven, but first you exhaust your own capabilities, no matter how small they seem to you. And I will multiply this slight offering of yours, as much as you can't imagine".

Who ever believed that in the darkness of the Turkish Occupation, so many schools could be founded by a possessionless priestmonk? And nevertheless! The radiance of the life of Saint Kosmas the Aitolian, made even Turkish officers offer money for Christian schools. The "breads" of his words, kneaded with the tears of his prayers and the sweat of his foot-journeys, continue today also, to satiate innumerable multitudes of believers.

### **"Not by bread alone"**

Christ gives unsurpassable value even to the smallest contribution of ours, and furthermore when it is done with a spirit of sincere love and sacrifice. With such a spirit, the disciples also offered their own food, preferring that they themselves remain hungry, in order to satiate even a few people. And Christ, even if

He were able to make the stones bread or to lower mana from heaven, preferred their own five breads and two fish. And after He multiplied them, He called them to serve with their own hands in the great miracle. It is a great honor but also simultaneously a great responsibility, for God to want us as His colleagues in His wondrous works.

Christ, with this amazing miracle, aside from the fact that He gives one more triumphant witness about His godhead, wants to praise and to encourage the zeal of the multitude, that went to hear Him and all those "who are hungering and thirsting for his righteousness." Such people verify, in the most indisputable manner, His answer to the first temptation of the devil. When the devil challenged Christ to make the stones breads, in order to satisfy the -after the 40 day fast - hunger of His, Christ answered him: "man does not live by material bread alone, but with the word of God".

### **The danger of an empty life with a full stomach**

In the wonderful work of Dostoyevsky "Brothers Karamazov," the deeper meaning of this temptation is stressed. There the devil, with the mouth of the great interrogator, challenges Christ with the words: «make the stones breads, and all of humanity will follow you like a flock without a will. For most people, the gift of freedom is unbearable for them because it creates responsibilities. So take their freedom away, and make them to blindly obey, satiating them with breads!» Christ however, the only source of true freedom, does not want to buy our freedom with breads. And the miracle, which is mentioned in today's gospel, Christ did not do it, in order to make us satiated, on the one hand, but His followers, without any will. A life only with bread and without freedom has no meaning. It is an unlivable life.