

develop? Maybe is it superfluous moralistic speech?

Nothing in the Gospel is extra as superfluous! Whatever is documented, is mentioned in the prism of salvation, of sanctification and of the theosis of God's creature. And the reference to gifts and their appropriate utilization, does not occur, in order to serve the here and now of human society, but eschatologically, the perspective of eternity. Whatever is said, is documented to stress, that unrelated to if we were given more or less gifts, we will be called to give account to God for their utilization!

Why is the servant who buried the talent punished? Not for some evil or sin he did, but because he didn't do the good! He is punished not for those things he did, but for those things that while he had the capability of doing, he didn't do! He is condemned because God, even though He gave him the opportunity, found him fruitless, with empty hands and his gifts inactivated! Whatever has been given to us in this life, is given to us under the prism of eternity. No matter how small and unimportant our whatsoever skill seems, we will be judged on how much we submitted it to divine logic. The Christian is not called passively to await the Second Coming of the Lord, but to act edifyingly, utilizing his gifts, gaining thus his entrance into "the joy of his Lord".

Archimandrite I. N

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2016 16TH SUNDAY OF MATTHEW,**

*Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus, Luke of Mount Stirion, Theopemptos the Martyr & his Companions, George the New Martyr of Crete, Afterfeast of the Presentation of Our Lord and Savior in the Temple.*

**TONE OF THE WEEK: Tone Three**

**EOTHINON Third Eothinon**

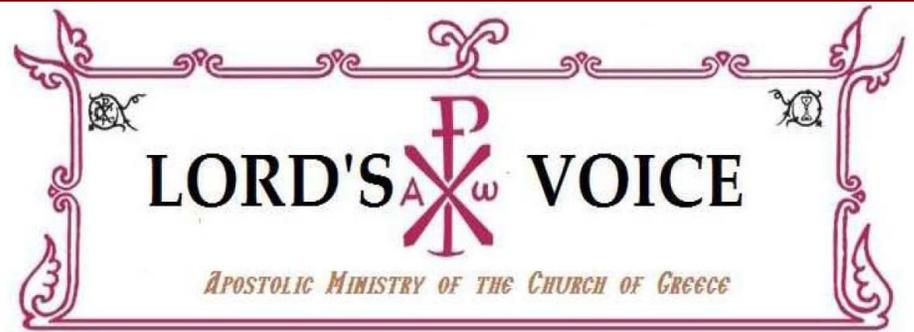
**EPISTLE: St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians 6:1-10**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 25:14-30**

**NEXT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2016 SUNDAY OF THE CANAANITE.** *Holy Father Auxentius of the Mountain, Cyril, Equal-to-the-Apostles & Teacher of the Slavs, Nicholas the New Martyr of Corinth*

**EPISTLE: St. Paul's Letter to the Corinthians.. 6:16-18; 7:1**

**GOSPEL: Matthew 15:21-28**



**64<sup>TH</sup> YEAR FEBRUARY 7, 2016 PAMPHLET # 6 (3271)**

### **PERSPECTIVE IN OUR LIFE**

From ancient years the myth of the ant and the cricket is familiar, according to which, all summer long, the diligent ant was getting tired and very sweaty was carrying his toil, so that in winter, he would have a sufficiency of goods, in order to survive. On the contrary, the lazy cricket, all summer long, was singing and partying, resulting in winter, ending up unprepared and paying, even with his life. The myth always taught the necessary providing, which man had to take, so as to be able to face the difficulties of life, in other words, it taught prudent forethought and preparedness.

Although the above practical myth exists in order to indicate the perspective of safety and of prudence in daily life, and in man's actions, we could say that as a human creation, it prepares the divine sermon of today's gospel passage. And the divine sermon, through the developed parable, comes to give another, higher perspective and dimension, to the teaching of the human myth.

### **The talents**

The Lord also mentions – a story –not a real event. A certain rich man, before travelling far away, called the people who depended on him, and gave them talents, the money of the time, analogous with the capabilities, which he judged each one had. He left for another land, but after a time he returned and asked an account from his people, for the way in which they had used the talents that he had entrusted to them. And he to whom he had left the five talents, used them in such a way, as to gain another five, something for which he was

*The Gospel according to Matthew 25:14-30*

The Lord said this parable: "A man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'" As he said these things he cried out: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

praised and rewarded. The same thing with him to whom he had given the two talents. He though, to whom he had entrusted one, overcome by negative emotions against his master, instead of utilizing the talent even to the slightest degree, preferred to bury it deeply in the ground, and to leave it unutilized! So for this reason, he is criticized and in the end, punished.

Our Christ does not want to give us lessons of macroeconomy. He is not one more person, who is coming to suggest some financial-social system of organizing human symbiosis. He is the One who is projecting on earth, the reality of the Kingdom of the Heavens. And the talk about talents does not aim at financial reasonings and discussions, but it hides a deeper symbolism. The interpretation of our godbearing Fathers is unanimous, that behind the word "talents," are hid and denoted, the more or less gifts, with which Holy God has adorned and supplied each one of us. The sacred Chrysostom says that to one God gave strength, to another skill in his hands, to another quickness on his feet, to another a sharp mind, to another wisdom and prudence, to another money, to another authority, to another a good sense...And all these gifts of God, analogous with what each one can endure, are called talents.

### **The purpose of the talents**

Why are the talents given to us by God? Of course, not for us to bury them! Since Holy God gave them to us, He is awaiting their utilization by us. John Chrysostom again says: "God gave (...) "so that all these things, we use unto our salvation and the benefit of neighbors". Our gifts exist both for us to help our own selves, but also our neighbor, in other words, we can use them both for our own benefit, as well as for the benefit of the social whole, of the other, of our brother.

Consequently someone would say that the above sound very logical and self evident. It is natural for each person, since he is living in a structured society, to contribute according to his capabilities, enlisting his abilities, since in this way, he can claim initially his survival, furthermore also his social advancement.

So why does this need to be a topic for the gospel passage to