

Sept. 27, 2020: The 18th Sunday after Pentecost (The miraculous fishing)

Epistle: II Cor. 9:6-11:

But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever." Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11:



So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into

the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. So they signaled 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. 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 and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

The miraculous catch of fish described in this Sunday's gospel reading, comes in the context of a series of other miracles, including the healing of Simon's (Peter's) mother-in-law, presented in the previous chapter of Luke's gospel. It is no wonder then that the Savior was followed by many people who wanted to see and hear Him. By this time, He was on the banks of the Lake of Gennesaret, being pressed about by the multitude, which came *"to hear the word of God."* He uses Simon's boat as a platform from which He taught the people and also to show the four fishermen a Messianic sign, His divine power. When the Lord told Simon to *"Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch,"* Simon voiced his doubt, substantiated by an unsuccessful night of fishing: *"Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing."* At the same time, he didn't want to be rude with this unexpected guest on his boat who was sought by so many people: *"nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."*

Simon's obedience to the Master's command resulted in a miracle and the realization of the fact that a very special person, a holy person was present on his boat, which immediately caused a self examination of his moral condition and a public display of humility: *"When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"*

The divine words of Christ, the miraculous fishing and His presence in their midst had a life-changing impact on those four fishermen, who were about leave everything behind and enroll in a three-and-one-half-year program at the "Nazarene Academy:,, *"So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him."*

In order to understand how this miracle, which concluded with the recruiting of the four fishermen, we can say the following: The Lord uses a variety of ways and means to recruit us to become His disciple: His divine teaching, the miracles that we experience in our lives and His presence which we must feel and respond with the same humility and sense of repentance, leaving everything that is of no real value and following Him.

Fr. George Bazgan

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, which limits the number of people attending Church services, we are asking our members to make sure that, for time being, only 1 (one) person from each family attend our Sunday Divine Liturgy.

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: washing their hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them **to pay their membership as soon as possible.**

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations for the rest of the year.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!