

St. Basil the Great:

"The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry; the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of him who is naked; the shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot; the money that you keep locked away is the money of the poor; the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices that you commit."

St. John Chrysostom:

Blaming the Victim: "There was even something more in addition to these evils, namely that his [Lazarus] reputation was slandered by foolish people. For most people, when they see someone in hunger, chronic illness, and the extremes of misfortune, do not even allow him a good reputation but judge his life by his troubles, and think that he is surely in such misery because of wickedness." [St. John Chrysostom (+ 407 A.D), *On Wealth and Poverty*, pp. 31-2, SVS, Crestwood, NY 1984]

"Therefore, let us use our goods sparingly, as belonging to others, so that they may become our own. How shall we use them sparingly, as belonging to others? When we do not spend them beyond our needs, and do not spend for our needs only, but give equal shares into the hands of the poor". [St. John Chrysostom (+ 407 A.D), *On Wealth and Poverty*, p. 50, SVS, Crestwood, NY 1984]

"The poor man has one plea, his want and his standing in need: do not require anything else from him; but even if he is the most wicked of all men and is at a loss for his necessary sustenance, let us free him from hunger." [St. John Chrysostom (+ 407 A.D), *On Wealth and Poverty*, p. 52, SVS, Crestwood, NY 1984]

"The almsgiver is a harbor for those in necessity: a harbor receives all who have encountered shipwreck, and frees them from danger; whether they are bad or good or whatever they are who are in danger, it escorts them into his own shelter. So you likewise, when you see on earth the man who has encountered the shipwreck of poverty, do not judge him, do not seek an account of his life, but free him from his misfortune." [St. John Chrysostom (+ 407 A.D), *On Wealth and Poverty*, p. 52, SVS, Crestwood, NY 1984]

"Not to share our own wealth with the poor is theft from the poor and deprivation of their means of life; we do not possess our own wealth, but theirs." [St. John Chrysostom (+ 407 A.D), *On Wealth and Poverty*, p. 55, SVS, Crestwood, NY 1984]

St. Cosmas of Aetolia:

"All right, you cannot give away all your belongings. Then give half, or a third, or a fifth. Is even this too heavy? Then give one tenth. Can you do that? Is it still too heavy?"

"How about this. Don't sell yourself as a slave. Don't give a penny to the poor. Only do this. Don't take your poor brother's coat, don't take his bread, don't persecute him, don't eat him alive. If you don't want to do him any good, at least do him no harm. Just leave him alone. Is this also too heavy?"

"You say you want to be saved. But how? How can we be saved if everything we are called to do is too heavy? We descend and descend until there is no place further down. God is

merciful, yes, but he also has an iron rod.”

St. John of Kronstadt:

One evening, when Father John had come home at supper time after visiting many sick people, he heard a woman cry by the side of his house. Since he had had no rest since 5 in the morning, Matushka tried to convince him to have his supper first, and a small rest, then go and see what the problem was. But Fr John could not wait: he found out the woman’s husband was dying, and she and her five children had had nothing to eat for two days.

Fr John helped the woman get up: she had been slumped on the ground in the passage by the house. On the way to her house, he gave her what he had in his pocket, a mere 20 kopeks, enough though to buy bread and eggs: probably about two pounds in today’s money.

When they got to her house, he saw the husband seemingly lifeless, and gazing absently. The children were filthy and moaning because of their hunger. Fr John and the lady fed the children, then cleaned them up as well as the one-room flat. Then they knelt in the icon-corner, and Fr John prayed, making the woman repeat after him. Finally, he remained silent a long time, bowing his head. Before returning home, he said: “Come and see me at the church tomorrow.”

The next day, at the end of the Liturgy, the woman was waiting outside the church, and Fr John gave her over a thousand roubles in various envelopes which had been given to him that morning. The lady’s husband recovered, did well in business and some time later sent Fr John 10,000 roubles to give to people in need. ~Quotes provided by Fr. Paisius of FOCUS Kansas City and St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church