



■ Even animals keep the Divine Commandments

The Sanctity of Sunday As a Day of Rest*

Monastics should set an example for laypeople

One day, a fisherman brought fresh fish to the pious Father Menas of the Skete of St. Anna [on Mt. Athos] for the Feast Day of his Church.

The Elder was puzzled as to when he could have caught the fish, since it was a Sunday.

“When did you catch them?” he asked the fisherman.

“This morning. They’re as fresh as they get!” he replied.

Father Menas then explained: “My child, I cannot buy them; they are accursed, since you caught them on a Sunday.”

The fisherman was unable to comprehend this, and so the Elder then said:

“Would you like to see for yourself? Give one of the fish to the cat and you will see that he will not eat it.”

And indeed, the cat did not touch it, but turned away with disgust.

The fisherman was, of course, dumbfounded, and thenceforth did not work on Sundays and Great Feasts.

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Father Menas was an exemplary monk and was distinguished by his piety and asceticism. He would eat once a day, at the ninth hour [3 p.m.], food prepared without oil.



Being at the same time very humble, it was natural that the Grace of God should abide in him.



(*) Elder Paisios the Athonite, *Athonite Fathers and Athonite Matters* [translated from the original Greek] (Sourote, Thessalonike: Ekdotis Hierou Hesychasteriou “Evangelistes Ioannes ho Theologos,” 1998), pp. 132-133.