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How the saints heal their brothers - Photo journal from fishing



How can we put up with these things unless it is because we have no true love? If we have true love with sympathy and patient labor, we shall not go about scrutinizing our neighbor's shortcomings.

As it is said, 'Love covers up a multitude of sins', and again, 'Love thinks no evil ... hides everything,' If we have true love, that very love should screen anything of this kind, as did the saints when they saw the shortcomings of men. Were they blind? Not at all! But they simply would not let their eyes dwell on sins. Who hated sin more than the saints? But they did not hate the sinners at the same time, nor condemn them, nor turn away from them, but they suffered with them, admonished them, comforted them, gave them remedies as sickly members, and did all they could to heal them.

Take a fisherman: when he casts his hook into the sea and a large fish takes the bait, he perceives first that the fish struggles violently and is full of fight, so he

does not try to pull it in immediately by main force for the line would break and the catch would be lost in the end. No! He plays out the line and, as he says, allows the fish to run freely, but when he feels the line slacken and the first struggles have calmed down, he takes up the slack line and begins, little by little, to draw him in.

So the holy fathers, by patience and love, draw the brother and do not spurn him nor show themselves unfriendly towards him, but as a mother who has an unruly son does not hate him or turn away from him but rules him with sweetness and sometimes does things to please him, so they always protect him and keep him in order and they gain a hold on him so that with time they correct the erring brother and do not allow him to harm anyone else, and in doing so they greatly advance towards the love of Christ.

Based on Saint Dorotheos of Gaza

In these photos the Vatopedi fishermen laboring for the brotherhoods' "daily catch".

- Source: asceticexperience.com