

## **Saint Nicholas' user guide on how to protect our houses - Photo Journal from his chapel**



Someone asked me if he could use a gun to protect his house.

Well... I don't know about guns.

But I know about locks to protect the houses:

A very old hermit monk here had a kelli dedicated to Saint Nicholas. Even though he was alone in the wilderness, he not only didn't have a lock at his cell, but he left the door largely open even if he went some distance away (Karyes, a monastery etc.). In the many years he behaved like this, no unfortunate accident occurred.

This went on for years till once a group of pilgrims come to him and were impressed by his ascetic life – especially about the fact that he left the door open. They asked 'What can we bring to you? What do you need?'. He replied 'Nothing'.

However, next time when they came, they brought with them a lock.

The old monk was very impressed by the strange mechanism how it worked and, very satisfied, he decided to use it.

In just one week, burglars entered in his cell and took everything.

He started to cry and pray to Saint Nicholas to bring the things back. After a while, Saint Nicholas appeared to him and said with a fierce expression: 'Why did you put the lock on? I've protected your kelli for so many years and nothing's happened. Why did you abandon me and put your hope in a lock?' The old monk repented and asked humbly: 'Saint Nicholas please forgive me!' However the Saint didn't back down: 'Take the lock off!' Then the old monk replied also on the same tone: 'Very well, but only if you bring the things back!' The Saint said: 'I will, just take the lock off!' Then, finally, the monk said: 'I will, but only if you bring the things back. If you don't, I'll put the lock back again'. Indeed, in mere days, the things of the old monk were brought to him by the burglars themselves.

Well, some people think that they have a family to protect, but unless they have a protector from above, no earthly protection will save them from afflictions.

Photograph taken during the Divine Liturgy celebrated at the Chapel of Saint Nicholas at the port of the Holy and Great Monastery of Vatopaidi, Mount Athos.

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