

THE MOTHER OF GOD APPEARS TO SAINT GREGORY THE WONDERWORKER

St. Gregory the Wonder Worker is commemorated by our Holy Church on November 17th. On account of his blameless conduct and holy way of life, he was elected to the episcopate. Due to his extreme humility, however, he considered himself unworthy for such a calling, and went into hiding on a remote mountain. Despite this—in a totally unconventional and exceptional manner—he was still elevated to the episcopate, being consecrated Archbishop of Neo-Caesarea from a distance, *in absentia*. After being installed to the noble episcopal throne, God deemed him worthy of extraordinary gifts, one of which was imparted to him through the Mother of God.

One night, when the saint was praying in his cell according to his habit, a divine light brighter than the sun filled the entire room, and a noble lady accompanied by a venerable elder appeared. Gregory was awestruck. He sensed that this revered Lady must be the Mother of God and Queen of the Angels; however, he was uncertain of the elder's identity until he heard the Mother of God say to him: "John, you are the Disciple of my Son and Lord, and have been named the Theologian. Deliver the mystery of true faith to Gregory, the beloved servant of your Teacher. Grant him the ability to comprehend theology to its fullest depth, so that no heretic is ever able to vanquish him." Upon hearing this, Gregory understood that it was Saint John the Evangelist who had been sent with the Mother of God to teach him the Orthodox Dogma of Faith. God enlightened him in this extraordinary manner, because at that time, many false teachers were deceiving the multitudes with their persuasive words, and convincing believers to adopt their distorted and heretical beliefs.

After receiving the gift of theology, Saint Gregory proceeded to compose a Creed of the Orthodox Faith, according to the revelation and teaching he had received from the Mother of God and the Saint John the Evangelist, and he subsequently entrusted this doctrine to Christ's Holy Church, as his biographer St. Gregory of Nyssa attests.