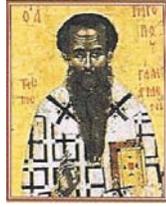


# September 30

G. † *Holy Hieromartyr Gregory the Great, Bishop of Armenia*



Born a Parthian, he accepted Christianity in Cappadocian Caesarea, from where he immigrated to Armenia and here during the reign of King Trdat he suffered for his faith in Christ. St. Gregory was thrown into a deep and unclean pit, in which he spent all of 14 years among poisonous reptiles, in dampness and stench, receiving food secretly from one widow. "Bitter torment" and "long-term imprisonment" did not shake Gregory's courage and he continued to firmly keep his faith in Christ. Released from the pit to help Trdat who fell into a delirium, he healed, converted and baptized him into Christianity. Having been installed as Bishop of Armenia, "the long-suffering shepherd", "praise of Armenia", "cultivated the fruitless field", sowed the "verbal seeds" of piety into the hearts of all Armenians, and dispersed "the darkness of idolatrous atheism". For all this he was called "the Illuminator of Armenia". He not only illumined Christianity among the Armenians, but also among neighboring nations. He died in the year 335. His relics subsequently were transferred to Constantinople, and only his right hand remained in Echmiadzin, Armenia.

*Kontakion, tone 2*

**Admirable and the hierarch of all,  
Like a sufferer for the truth,  
Today let the faithful praise in songs and hymns,  
The vigilant shepherd and teacher Gregory,  
A lamp and advocate of the whole world,  
For he prays to Christ to save us.**

**Epistle:** 1 Cor. 16:13-24; sel. 166. **Gospel:** Mt. 24:42-47; sel. 103.

✙ *Our Ven. Father Gregory, Wonderworker of Vologda, on the Pelshma River.*

Son of a Galich nobleman Lopotov, abandoning "worldly turmoil" and "fleeting glory" and most of all loving "monastic life", he accepted monasticism in the Galich Theotokos Monastery. Then he practiced asceticism in the Rostov Savior Monastery where for his virtuous life he was elected Hegumen. Fleeing human glory, Ven. Gregory quietly left there for the Vologda forest. "Severe abstinence", "patient and frequent prayer", he cleansed his "soul and body" from passions and, undergoing every "evil attack" from the evil one, he courageously conquered the "influence and presence of the enemy". After several years of the difficult hermetical way of life, he founded a monastery on the shore of the Pelshma River (see the Vologda Diocese) in which he

practiced asceticism until his death in 1442. His relics repose in a hidden place in his monastery.

*Troparion, tone 8*

**Illumined with love of Christ, O Divinely-wise One,  
You gleamed with virtue and hated any carnal pleasure,  
And having settled in the hermitage,  
You practiced much asceticism in this contemporary life,  
In hymns, vigils and fasting.  
For this reason Christ enriched you with the gift of wonders.  
But remember us, who honor your all radiant memory,  
O Venerable Father Gregory,  
And pray to Christ God to save our souls.**

*Kontakion, tone 8*

**Wounded with love for Christ, O Venerable One,  
You followed that irretrievable desire,  
And began to hate any carnal pleasure,  
And settled in the hermitage,  
You practiced much asceticism.  
And for that Christ enriched you with the gift of wonders.  
Remember us, who honor your all radiant memory,  
That we may cry to you:  
Rejoice, our Venerable Father Gregory.**

**His Synaxis is done in his monastery and in his temples.**

*St. Michael, first Metropolitan of Kiev, Wonderworker of all Russia*

According to one tradition, he was Syrian, according to another, Bulgarian and according to a third, Greek. By the petition of the Holy Equal to the Apostles Prince Vladimir, he was sent to Russia by the Patriarch of Constantinople Nicholas Chrysoberges to spread the holy faith and establish the church in Russia. "This metropolitan is very much a teacher, sufficiently skilled with wisdom, and great and merciful in his way of life, and therefore was both meek and humble". St. Michael appeared in Russia with apostolic zeal, with the spirit of pastoral love and wisdom, and was distinguished among the ancient Eastern Hierarchs. Having baptized the 12 sons of the Holy Prince Vladimir and all the people of Kiev, the hierarch with paternal meekness and love destroyed pagan traditions and superstitions among the catechumens and spread the Christian faith over the face of the Russian land. He built temples in Kiev and other cities and villages, established and trained presbyters, chose skilled teachers and charged them with the training and formation of the children in the fear of God and chastity. As

said in the Stepennaia Kniga (the Book of Degrees): "Having called all competent teachers, and having admonished them both to rightly and orderly teach young children, as in the words of the book of reason, such things as morality, truth and love, and to a pericope of the wisdom of the fear of God both in chastity and with humility of mind. Do not teach them with rage, cruelty, or anger, but with apparently joyous awe and love with the usual and sweet introductory teaching and tender comfort, so that they do not despond, do not weaken. Diligently and frequently listen to and admonish them, to commit whomsoever to their lessons of instruction with deliberation against whatever powers, and with softness, so that they do not despond. But furthermore always apply the teaching from the law of the Lord to them for the advantage of the soul and body, and to abstain from mad and inappropriate words". Having visited the Novgorod and Rostov lands, the hierarch here again converted many to Christ, dispersing the darkness of idolatry with the words of the Gospel, calming and strengthening believers with paternal conversations. During all his life the hierarch was distinguished by meekness, humility, with indefatigableness in labors and was the true father of his numerous flock. Hierarch Michael died in the year 992. "Much lamentation and mourning was created in the city of Kiev by his departure to God". His relics are in a silver tomb in the Kievan Caves Dormition Cathedral. They originally openly reposed in the Church of the Tithe, but after its destruction by the Tartars they were kept in the nearest caves. In 1730 they were transferred from there to its present location. The service for St. Michael is printed in the published September Monthly Menaion, published by the Kievan Laura of the Caves. This service is not in the Moscow Synodal printing house published Menaion, and there only one instruction for this day in memory of St. Michael is found.

*Troparion, tone 4*

**Today the prophecy of the first called among the Apostles is fulfilled  
For behold, grace has shown on these hills and faith has increased.  
Those who had grown old because of unbelief  
Have been reborn by the divine font,  
And have become a newly elected people, a royal priesthood,  
A holy generation and flock of Christ,  
To whom you were revealed as their first shepherd,  
Having served their first Baptism.  
And now standing before the Master Christ God,  
Pray that all the sons of Russia may be saved.  
For you have boldness as a hierarch and church server of God.**

*Kontakion, tone 2*

**You revealed yourself to Russia as a second Moses, O Father,  
Bearing the grapevine apprehended spiritually from Egyptian idolatry  
To a land, foreknown in prophecy:  
Let it be said, the faith will be confirmed in the land  
And on the tops of the hills of Kiev, more than in Lebanon,  
Fruit will be grown, nourishing the whole world.**

**Having tasted this, let us bless you, O Michael, Hierarch of God.**

*Martyrs Hripsime, Gayane and their Companions*

They suffered for Christ in Armenia in the 4th Century. During the persecution of Diocletian these virgin saints (in number 37) emigrated from the Roman Empire to Armenia. St. Hripsime, distinguished with unusual beauty, rejected the unclean desires of Armenian King Trdat and for this she and her companions were turned over to cruel torture. Among the companions of Hripsime and Gayane known by name are: Mane, Mariamne and Maria.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) pp. 0358-0359  
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