

About St. Arsenios the Cappadocian - by Elder Paisios of Mount Athos

St. Arsenios the Cappadocian (1840-1924) was the spiritual father of Elder Paisios' family, and he baptized Elder Paisios as an infant. Throughout his life Elder Paisios had great love and reverence for the memory of St. Arsenios, and it was out of this love that he compiled this book.



"Father Arsenios proclaimed true Orthodoxy with his Orthodox life. He mortified his flesh in asceticism from his ardent love of God, and modified souls with the Grace of God. He believed deeply and healed many, believers and non-believers. Few words, many miracles. He experienced much and hid much. Within his hard outer shell, he concealed his sweet, spiritual fruit. A very harsh father to himself, but also a very loving father to his children. He never beat them with the law. ... As minister of the Most High, he did not tread the earth, and as co-administrant of the sacraments he shone upon the world."

Elder Paisios

St. Arsenios pastored his Greek Orthodox flock amidst extremely difficult conditions. He lived with his people in the village of Farasa in Cappadocia, which after 1453 had fallen into the hands of the Muslim Turks. Under the harsh yoke of the Turks, the Greek people of Farasa formed an oasis of Orthodox Christianity. They sought refuge in the holy St. Arsenios, who was their teacher, their spiritual father, and the healer of their souls and bodies.

"In Farasa and in the whole region, there was no doctor to be found, except Fr. Arsenios himself, who was a teacher and a doctor of souls and bodies. He did not, of course, give medical prescriptions to the sick, but read an appropriate prayer over them and they recovered.";

Elder Paisios

His reputation as a healer was so great that not only Greek Christians but also Turkish Muslims came to him for healing. Many times his village was threatened with violence from marauding Turks, but each time it was preserved in a miraculous way by St. Arsenios. The accounts in this book, which were taken down by Elder Paisios from eyewitnesses, testify to how powerfully God works through His holy ones, and to how lovingly He cares for and protects His children amidst adversity.

"Stella Koglanidou tells how they had brought to her father's house in Farasa a Turk who could not speak, and her father took him to Fr. Arsenios for him to read a prayer over and make well. While Fr. Arsenios was reading the Gospel over him, even before he had finished, the dumb man started speaking."

Elder Paisios

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