

THE LIFE OF SAINT NEKTARIOS

BISHOP OF PENTAPOLIS, THE WONDERWORKER

Early Years

Saint Nektarios was born October 1st, 1846, in northern Greece, and given the name Anastasis when he was baptized as an infant. His pious parents and grandmother were the first to implant within his soul the love and reverence for God, raising him **“in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4)**. From early on, Anastasis stood out from the rest of the children his age, as he preferred to occupy himself with divine matters rather than games.

From early childhood, he would pray with his grandmother. Every time she would read the 50th Psalm and reach the verse, **“I will teach transgressors your ways and the impious to return to You” (Ps. 50:)**, young Anastasi would cover his grandmother’s mouth with his hand and proceed to repeat these words several times himself, thus denoting the divine calling he was to receive later in life.

By the age of five, he had learned most of the Saints’ apolytikia by heart.

When he was seven years old, he once purchased a stack of papers and began sewing the sheets together. When asked by his mother what he was up to, he replied, “I want to make books, so I can write the words of God in them.” From time to time, he would also construct miniature pulpits, from where he would pretend to give sermons.

Anastasi loved to attend church, where he would carefully listen to the services and sermons. Upon returning home from church, he would recite from memory everything he had heard. All these were undoubtedly heralds of the pious child’s future heavenly achievements. Such examples are evident in the life of other great hierarchs as well.¹

¹ When Saint Athanasios the Great was a young boy, he would gather with other boys to re-enact the Divine Liturgy and the service of baptism. Similarly, when Saint Paisios of Mount Athos was still in elementary school, he would call other young boys his age and read to them accounts from the lives of the Saints.

Once, while fishing on a boat with his father and one of his brothers, an unforeseen storm arose at sea. It was not long before the strong winds ripped the sail and the boat began to be tossed about by the waves. In this moment of imminent danger, Anastasi quickly removed his belt, and used it to secure the sail in place. He then took hold of the helm, and guided the boat through the tempest toward the island of Mitilini, until they docked safely at the port, to the unexpected surprise of everyone present. When they returned to their home, his father Demos called his wife and told her emphatically, “Vasiliki, Anastasi is going to become a Saint!...”