

THE EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF THE THEOTOKOS

The entire external appearance and demeanor of the Virgin Mary, the Birth-giver of God, was in every way modest and venerable. She spoke few words when necessary. She was eager to obey others. She was easily approachable. She honored and respected everyone. She was of medium stature, or, as others have said, she was a little taller than average. She would not open up to just anyone. Laughter was unknown to her. She was completely devoid of agitation and anger. The color of her God-bearing complexion resembled the hue of wheat. She had blonde hair, and striking eyes gleaming with a divine modesty, adorned with piercing pupils resembling olives, and gladsome eyelashes. She had black rounded eyebrows. Her nose was smooth and straight. Her immaculate lips were vibrant red, glowing decorously, and dripping with words of sweetness. Her venerable face was not round but slightly long. Her God-bearing hands were of considerable length, and her fingers were similarly long and slender. She was unpretentious and humble. She chose to wear plain clothing made of naturally colored fabric, as is evident from her sacred robe, which was not dyed. Generally speaking, the Theotokos was abounding with such divine grace and grandeur that everyone who saw her would be overcome by a certain awe and reverence, simultaneously coupled with an internal joy in their soul. Even if someone had never seen her before, one would immediately conclude from her external appearance alone that she was indeed the Mother of God.

—*St. Nikodemos of Mount Athos*

