



Fathers of the Church: St. Gregory Thaumaturgus

Life and Works

Gregory Thaumaturgus

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Born of an aristocratic pagan family at Neocaesarea in Pontus at the beginning of the third century, St. Gregory received his early training in literature and rhetoric in his birthplace. While visiting Caesarea in Palestine, he chanced to hear the Christian philosopher and theologian Origen and remained there for five years as his pupil. Deeply influenced by Origen, Gregory returned to Pontus a convinced Christian and became the first bishop of Neocaesarea. His dedication greatly influenced his people, and he became known as "Gregory the Great," "the Teacher," or "the Wonderworker."

St. Gregory's influence is clear from the many *Lives* (or narrations) that circulated in the fourth and fifth centuries, the prayers and invocations that asked for his patronage, and his place in Eastern canon law. Of his life, however, not much is known. No manuscript collection of his writings was made in antiquity.

This volume presents the earliest and most important *life* of Gregory Thaumaturgus, preached by St. Gregory of Nyssa, and all the works that can be attributed to Gregory Thaumaturgus himself. It includes his *Address of Thanksgiving* to his teacher Origen; his Christian adaptation and interpretation of the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes; his regulations restoring order in the Christian community after an invasion by the Goths; a remarkable treatise on God's ability to suffer and another on the Trinity; and two small texts that may or may not have been written by him.

This is the first time that these texts have been brought together in any language. The extensive introduction and notes offer readers an unprecedented opportunity to learn about "The Wonderworker."

Michael Slusser is associate professor of theology at Duquesne University.

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