

## **Saint Gregory the great**

**Saint Gregory the Great was born in the city of Rome into an aristocratic family whose members filled political and religious offices. Gregory's father was a senator and later became the Prefect of Rome, similar to the role of mayor. His mother, Silvia, was a virtuous woman who was later recognized as a saint, as were two of his aunts. Thus, Gregory's influential, wealthy, and saintly family provided him with a stellar education and nurtured him in the Catholic faith from a young age.**



**Pope Gregory demonstrated his missionary spirit. Most notably, he initiated a mission that began the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon peoples in England. It's said that Pope Gregory once encountered some slave boys in the Roman market. He asked where they were from and was told they were Angles from England. Gregory replied that the boys were angels. Seeing the boys being sold as slaves planted a desire in Gregory's heart to convert that pagan nation and a resolve to send missionaries to the Angles and Saxons in England. These missions were ultimately very successful through the efforts of Saint Augustine of Canterbury and forty of his brother monks, who were sent from Pope Gregory's own monastery.**

### **The Miracle of Eucharist**

**When a woman laughed at the Eucharist, thinking it was only bread, St. Gregory prayed and the host turned to flesh.**

**St. Gregory was about to give communion to a woman who baked the bread used at Mass. The woman surprisingly started to laugh, because she thought it was ridiculous to think that the bread she made was the body of Jesus.**

**It happened that a widow brought hosts every Sunday [for the priest] to [celebrate] Mass with when Saint Gregory [was about to] give to her the holy sacrament in saying, [he said] May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you into everlasting life this woman began to laugh at Saint Gregory, and he withdrew his hand, and placed the sacrament upon the altar. And he asked her, before the people, why she laughed, and she said: Because that the**

bread that I have made with my proper hands, you call the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Saint Gregory put himself to prayer with the people, for to pray to God that hereupon he would show his grace for to confirm our belief, and when they were risen from prayer, Saint Gregory saw the holy sacrament in figure of a piece of flesh as great as the little finger of an hand, and by the prayers of Saint Gregory, the flesh of the sacrament turned into appearance of bread as it had been before, and therewith he gave communion to the woman, which after was more religious, and the people more firm in the faith.

The Catholic Church teaches that after the consecration takes place at Mass, the Eucharistic host substantially changes into the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. This means that while the appearances of bread and wine remain, the substance is changed (through the power of God) completely to the body and blood of Christ. It is a great mystery of the Church, but on occasion, God lifts the veil and allows even the appearances to change.