26/02/2025

Miraculous Syriac Icon of the Mother of God marks 67 years at Ghighiu Monastery



On February 25, 1958, the miraculous “Syriac” Icon of the Mother of God was brought to Ghighiu Monastery by Metropolitan Basil Samaha of Sergiopolis from the Patriarchate of Antioch and All the East.

For 67 years, many faithful who have prayed before the icon at Ghighiu Monastery have testified to receiving swift aid, healing, and strengthening in faith.

For this reason, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church decided, in its working session on February 15, 2018, to include the feast day of the “Veneration of the ‘Syriac’ Icon of the Mother of God at Ghighiu Monastery” in the liturgical calendar, to be commemorated annually on Bright Friday, the Feast of the Life-Giving Spring.

The miracles performed over time through the intercession of the “Syriac” Icon of the Mother of God at Ghighiu Monastery have been collected in a volume of testimonies from those who have received divine assistance. The book highlights numerous cases of healing, strengthening, and prompt responses to prayers.

Among the miracles attributed to the Mother of God following prayers before this holy icon is the significant recovery of Irene Ecaterina, the daughter of Archdeacon Mihail Bucă, protopsaltis of the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest. Shortly after the family sought the intercession of the Mother of God through prayers at the wonderworking icon at Ghighiu, the young girl’s medical tests showed rapid improvement.

Historical Background
The “Syriac” Icon of the Mother of God dates back to the 16th century and is painted on sandalwood, a rare and precious material.

Experts believe it may be a reproduction of Our Lady of Kazan, originally from Russia. Its journey from Russia to Syria remains unclear, but historical ties between the Patriarchate of Antioch and the Russian Church are believed to have played a role.

In Syria, the icon was venerated under the name “Mother of God of Bhamdoun – Mount Lebanon” before being transferred to Romania by Metropolitan Basil Samaha.

In 2008, marking 50 years since its arrival at Ghighiu Monastery, the icon underwent a restoration and beautification process. It was set in a golden frame, and the Mother of God and the Christ Child were adorned with gold halos decorated with pearls and natural rubies.

Another venerated icon of the Mother of God, widely honoured within the Romanian Orthodox Church, is the Prodromitissa icon of Mount Athos, commemorated on July 12.

Photo: Basilica.ro / Mircea Florescu

basilica.ro