

**AN
ELDER
SAID...**



**Edifying Stories
and Teachings from
Ancient and Modern Times**

“God alone knows how many chosen ones there are in the world”

The Romanian Peasant Woman and the Uncreated Light*

One winter morning, the renowned Romanian ascetic, Cleopas Ilie, was kneeling in the Alter of a monastery Church and reading the service of preparation before Holy Communion. A short while later, a woman who had come to the monastery the night before entered the Church to pray.

“She venerated all of the Icons and made prostrations everywhere,” recounts Fr. Cleopas. “She did not know that someone else was inside the Church. I kept my eyes fastened on her from the Beautiful Gate. After having venerated the Icons, she knelt in the middle of the Church, lifted up her hands, and said these words from her heart:

“O Lord, do not abandon me! Lord, do not abandon me!”

“I then saw her surrounded by a radiant yellow light, and was seized with fright! The woman fell with her face to the ground and prayed in silence. The luminous cloud in which she was bathed grew larger, and then gradually vanished. When the Divine light had faded away, she stood up and left the Church. It was a simple woman from one of the neighboring villages.

“Behold, then, who has the gift of prayer! And here it is, that laypeople sometimes surpass monastics! I then proceeded to the *proskomide*, and was so deeply moved that I began to weep and tremble with the list of names for commemoration in my hand. God alone knows how many chosen ones there are in the world!”



* Monk Seraphim: *Spiritual Gifts and Those Endowed with Spiritual Gifts* (Oropos: Holy Monastery of the Paraclete, 1990), Vol. III, pp. 217-218.