

Neophyte, patriarch of Bulgaria's Orthodox Church, falls asleep in the Lord at 78



His Beatitude Patriarch Neophyte of Bulgaria, a soft-spoken theologian who sought to restore the reputation of the Bulgarian Orthodox church hurt by links to businessmen and communist secret police, died at the age of 78, the church said late on Wednesday, 14 March 2024.

“After a long illness, His Beatitude the Bulgarian Patriarch and Sofia Metropolitan Neophyte, the archbishop of our native Holy Orthodox Church died in the Military Medical Academy (VMA-Sofia) at 10:22 p.m., as a result of multiple organ failure,” the church said in a statement.

Neophyte was enthroned in 2013 and succeeded Patriarch Maxim who led the church between 1971 and his death in 2012. About 80% of the population in the 6.8 million-strong Bulgaria are Orthodox Christians.