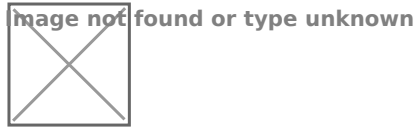


Bessarabia Metropolitan's message on Day of Remembrance of victims of 1946-1947 famine: Never forget their suffering



His Eminence Metropolitan Petru issued a message honouring the victims of the organised famine that ravaged Bessarabia from 1946 to 1947.

"We bow our heads and knees to the memory of the reposed and promise never to forget their suffering and the lesson they left us," the Metropolitan of Bessarabia said.

This commemoration takes place annually every third Saturday in April at the level of the Republic of Moldova.

Metropolitan Petru's message on the Day of Remembrance of the victims of the 1946-1947 famine: full text

Beloved faithful,

On this sad day of remembrance, we gather our hearts burdened by the pain and the tragic memory of a dark period in the history of the Romanian people on the left side of the Prut River – the famine orchestrated by the Stalinist regime in Bessarabia in 1946-1947.

This dreadful era evokes in us memories of the interminable anguish endured by those who lived through those awful days when despair and starvation tormented our Romanian territories, eroding the bodies and souls of our parents and grandparents. Thousands of innocent lives were lost as a result of the inhumane policies of the atheist communist regime, which caused starvation to affect over 10 per cent of the population.

Amid this tragedy, the Romanian people of Bessarabia experienced suffering in the deepest and bitterest form. Innocent children, mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, all were victims of a famine that drained souls and tore bodies, leaving behind a painful wound in the collective memory of our nation.

As we contemplate these traumatic events, we are unable to avoid considering the lessons that the past has taught us. The famine that occurred between 1946 and 1947 serves as a poignant reminder of the frailty of the human condition and the destructive potential of malevolence when it infiltrates our lives in the name of secular self-determination before God.

Yet, even amid darkness, the light of the martyrical faith shown by our forefathers shone like a beacon in the night. They lifted each other, strengthened themselves in prayer, and shared their bread with those in great need. They taught us about the solidarity and resilience of people who do not lose their faith and about the power of the Romanian spirit to survive amid such a human catastrophe.

We bow our heads and knees to the memory of the reposed and pledge never to forget their suffering and the lesson they left us, offering prayers to the Merciful God for all those who have left this world affected by starvation.

Let us use this opportunity to honour the memory of those who reposed in the Lord through our commitment to justice, respect for human dignity, and building a society based on Christian values in which such tragedies will never happen again.

Let us pray for peace, justice and a bright future.

May God rest them in His goodness!

✙ Petru,
Archbishop of Chisinau,
Metropolitan of Bessarabia and Exarch of the Territories

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