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Patriarch Daniel’s message for the Sunday of Parents and Children: How to overcome today’s family crisis



Patriarch Daniel of Romania explains how to overcome today’s family crisis in His Beatitude’s message for the Sunday of Parents and Children in the Romanian Orthodox Church.

„Life and happiness are God’s gifts, and today’s family crisis can be overcome with the help and the blessing of God the Creator, Who said: Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it! (Genesis 1:28)”, emphasized Patriarch Daniel.

Full text:

The primary role of parents in raising and educating children
Christ is risen!

The Sunday of Parents and Children, the first Sunday after June 1 – International Children’s Day, was established by the Holy Synod of the Romanian Orthodox Church through Resolution no. 629/March 12, 2009, to raise awareness on the primary role of parents in raising and educating children.

There is a deep connection between the mystery of the Church and the mystery of the family (according to Ephesians 5:32). The Church blesses the family and guides it on the path of salvation and holiness, while the family extends the Church: persons born into Christian families are part of the human community, or society, but also of the ecclesial community, which they join through the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. This holy rite introduces them to the paternal and filial love expressed within the Most Holy Trinity.

In the Christian family, the child grows in love for God and people, gets a bright view on world and life and acquires the first social skills and traits of its religious-moral character. This is why St John Chrysostom urges parents to cultivate good teachings for the soul in their children as early as possible: ‘If you imprint good teaching on his soul while he is still young, no one will be able to take it away from

him; it will harden like the imprint of a seal on wax’.

The weakening of faith, of parental, filial and brotherly love, and the neglect of education within families lead to the weakening of the family’s bond with the Church, to neglect and spiritual decay. Today we live in a context dominated by an individualistic mentality, which underestimates the family’s primary role in educating children and subordinates it to the individual’s and society’s transient and material interests.

The family crisis manifests itself in the abandonment of children by parents and of parents by children, in the high number of abortions and divorces, in an increase in domestic violence and juvenile delinquency, in the danger of drugs and various addictions, in the promotion of so-called “new models” of family, which are artificial ideological constructs.

Life and happiness are God’s gifts, and today’s family crisis can be overcome with the help and the blessing of God the Creator, Who said: Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it! (Genesis 1:28). The miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11) is performed by Lord Jesus Christ at the request of the Mother of God, as a blessing and joy for the bride and bridegroom, but also for all those present.

The Church defends the dignity of the family in society. It is therefore necessary to strengthen cooperation between the State and the Church in all areas of social, educational and cultural activity relating to the family. At the same time, the Church attaches particular importance to the religious education of children and young people through the Religion class in schools and the National Catechetical Programme “Christ shared with Children”. In this way, the Church orients children towards the love of God and of their fellow human beings, for the good of the family and society.

In the year 2024, proclaimed in the Romanian Patriarchate as the Solemn Year of Pastoral Care of the Sick, we urge parents and children to grow in true faith, to cherish the gift of health, to show the light of good deeds, especially to those who are suffering, and to share with everyone the joy of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Healer.

With much esteem and paternal blessing,

† DANIEL
Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church

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